MARCH 1958

COMMENTARY

War and Peace Today
The Turn of the Tide — H. STUART HUGHES
Should We Negotiate Now? — HANS J. MORGENTHAU
The Military Stalemate — DENIS HEALEY
Moscow's Aims Have Not Changed — G. F. HUDSON
Israel's Intellectuals — MEIR MINDLIN
Politics and the Puerto Ricans — DAN WAKEFIELD
The Country of the Crazy Horse—A Story — WALLACE MARKFIELD
A Critique of the New Jewish Theology — JUDD L. TELLER
The Portrait of Gertrude Stein—A Poem — HELEN NEVILLE
Cedars of Lebanon
Mordecai, Haman, and Ahasuerus
The Study of Man
Max Lerner's America — RICHARD CHASE

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Nathan Glazer — Maurice J. Goldbloom — Steven Marcus
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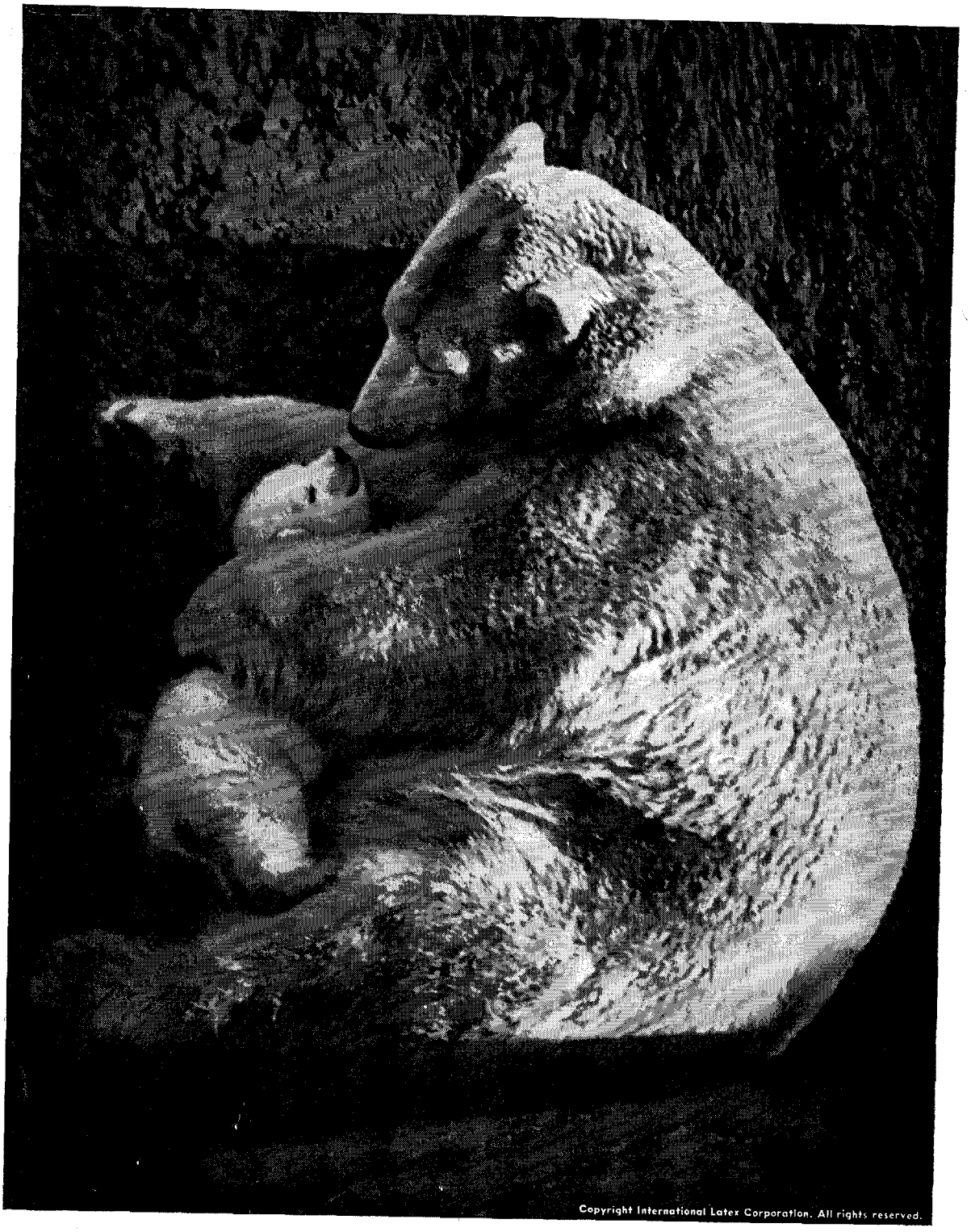

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COMMENTARY, incorporating *Contemporary Jewish Record:* Published monthly by the American Jewish Committee, 50¢ a copy; $6.00 a year; 2 years, $10.00; 3 years, $14.00. No additional charge for Canadian or foreign postage. Offices, 34 West 33rd Street, New York 1. Re-entered as second class matter October 30, 1945 at the Post Office in New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879. Copyright 1958 by the American Jewish Committee. All rights, including translation into other languages, reserved by the publisher in the United States, Great Britain, Mexico, and all countries participating in the International Copyright Convention and the Pan-American Copyright Convention. Indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Magazine Subject Index, and Public Affairs Information Service.

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

Israel Views Pan-Arabism *Nissim Rejwan*

What effect will the recent formation of a United Arab Republic of Egypt-Syria, and the subsequent linking of the two Hashemite kingdoms of Iraq-Jordan, have on Israel's position in the Middle East? The subject is examined by a noted Israeli commentator.

FEPC Today *James Rorty*

What have those states which established commissions against discriminatory practices in employment actually accomplished in breaking down barriers? An appraisal of the FEPC idea in action by the veteran journalist.

Life in the Peacetime Army *Harris Dienstfrey*

An analysis of the realities behind official manuals, by a young sociologist currently serving as an enlisted man in the army.

Freud: A Dissent and a Reply *Lillian Blumberg McCall and Hans Meyerhoff*

Mrs. McCall takes exception to Professor Meyerhoff's review of the third volume of Ernest Jones's biography of Freud, and to what she calls the sticky atmosphere of piety surrounding Freudianism; Professor Meyerhoff replies.

The Painter Pascin *Alfred Werner*

The story of the life and work of the modern Jewish painter, Jules Pascin, whose reputation has recently been growing after years of obscurity following his suicide in 1930.

American Usage Today *Stanley Edgar Hyman*

Reviewing two recent dictionaries of American usage, Mr. Hyman finds that a significant relation exists between verbal fashion and social attitudes. In the department "On the Horizon."

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COMMENTARY

During the past few months, public opinion on both sides of the Atlantic has been stirred by controversies over the best means to break the political deadlock between the Western world and the Soviet bloc. In opening its pages to a discussion of these issues by four well-known writers—two American, H. STUART HUGHES *and* HANS J. MORGENTHAU, *and two British,* DENIS HEALEY *and* G. F. HUDSON—COMMENTARY *intends to make a modest contribution to this debate. Despite important differences in evaluating the past and future effectiveness of the policies pursued by the Western governments and military staffs during the "cold war" period, all four contributors share the conviction that America and Europe must confront their perils jointly.*

THE TURN OF THE TIDE

Western Diplomacy in the Sputnik Era

H. STUART HUGHES

ONE of the deepest of the many obscurities in the understanding of history surrounds the problem of when and how large numbers of people decisively change their minds. Again and again in our studies we historians are confronted by a situation that seems to defy explanation in the terms to which we are accustomed: a sudden shift of mass emotion, a new enthusiasm that has swept through an entire community, or the equally unanticipated collapse of some popular credence. Events such as these fly in the face of our most cherished prejudices. We have been trained to think of history in terms of slow change and gradual development. We are at a loss to account for the sudden and the catastrophic.

In my own case, as, I judge, in that of many other teachers of history, it was a reading of *War and Peace* that first opened my eyes to a more satisfactory understanding of the past. One of the great merits, it seems to me, of Tolstoy's novel is that it conveys a sense of events as actually in the process of occurring. As conventionally written and taught, history is too orderly: the historian knows the outcome, and this knowledge infuses his account with a quality of inevitability to which the participants in the events themselves were total strangers. In *War and Peace* the full disorder of actual occurrence is restored to history: with a disarming innocence of manner, the author leads his reader into the very center of events until the latter quite unexpectedly

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finds himself caught up in the doubts and fears of the historical actors.

It is Tolstoy's picture of General Kutusov at the Battle of Borodino that conveys most arrestingly what I have in mind. Kutusov, we may recall, is far from being in control of events. He knows this—yet at the same time he knows that it is expected of him that he appear to be in control. It is up to him to incarnate the conviction of the Russian people that the French invaders will be repulsed and ultimately expelled from the country. Kutusov does not quite know how this is to be done—his mind is shrewd, but imprecise and slow-moving—yet he shares the popular conviction that it will in some fashion be accomplished. He also knows that a battle is expected of him, although he is quite sure that a battle will settle nothing. It will be only useless slaughter—but a battle before Moscow is essential to the popular faith. Hence he sits overlooking the field of Borodino—massive, imperturbable, apparently half-asleep—simply *representing* in admirably tangible fashion the unshakable conviction of his people, ostensibly directing a battle which, like the wider course of the war itself, is quite beyond his control.

Why, then, does he sit so stolid in his confidence? Because at some point in the past weeks it has dawned on him that time is on his side. Vaguely, gropingly, like the soldiers and peasants who trust in him, he has arrived at the belief that Napoleon can be stopped. The exact outlines of the future are still impenetrable. But the final result can each day be more clearly discerned. And on the other side, in the ranks of the Emperor's Grand Army, there is simultaneously appearing the beginnings of panic, of a loss of confidence that will soon become a rout.

This passage from hope to despair, or from fear to confidence, is what the physiologists or psychologists would call crossing a threshold. It is a process compounded of countless individual alterations in sentiment that are too minute for the historian to trace. Their sum, however, amounts to a psychological revolution. These gusts and shifts of popular emotion are obviously not as sudden as they seem. They are prepared over long periods and by subterranean processes at which we can do little more than guess. But when the change *does* appear on the surface, it comes with a rush. As in the case of Montaigne's peasant girl who found that she could no longer perform her morning routine of lifting her pet calf, the change may well appear from one day to the next, almost without warning, and totally disproportionate to its apparent "cause."

The decisive feature of such a change is this: as opposed to the more usual alterations in opinion of which we read in our daily newspaper, it involves the passive and inarticulate majority of society. It spreads beyond the ranks of the articulate and the politically committed to affect the opinion of those who scarcely know what their own sentiments are. One fine morning the man totally uninterested in public affairs unexpectedly wakes up to a new conviction.

It is one of these enormous changes that has taken place in American and world opinion since the Russians launched their Sputnik five months ago. And in consequence the relationship of this country to its allies, and to the uncommitted nations, has been radically altered in a fashion of which we are only just beginning to be aware.

WITHOUT some such hypothesis about how large masses of people lose an old conviction or reach a new one, we should be at a loss to account for the great and permanent alterations of sentiment in our common past. We should not be able to understand, for example, how rather suddenly in the middle of the 17th century religion came to seem a matter no longer worth fighting over, and the religious boundaries of Europe settled down to the outlines that have remained virtually unchanged until this day. Similarly, we should be in no position to assess those curious and recurring situations in which a war has gone on so long that the antagonists have almost forgotten their original aims—the situation depicted by Jonathan Swift, in his *Conduct of the Allies,* of a coalition that has in effect

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accomplished what it set out to do, and now is held together simply by a kind of habit of warfare in common: in such circumstances, almost overnight the popular pressure for an immediate peace may become overwhelming.

By the same process, and closer to our own time, I think we are just beginning to understand—or rather, we are beginning to revive our understanding—of the mentality that was responsible for the Munich pact of 1938. Once more, it was hindsight that for nearly two decades made the motives of the men of Munich incomprehensible to us. In the light of the war that followed, the conduct of leaders like Chamberlain and Daladier seemed merely fatuous. Today however—since the events of last autumn—we are in a better position to appreciate the problem they faced. Once more we can begin to understand the mentality of peace at any price. For what our President and the leaders of a number of the allied governments have in effect been saying to us has been very close to just that. In more acceptable terminology, perhaps, they have declared that war is "unthinkable" under present circumstances of anticipated mutual destruction. When one says that war is "unthinkable," one means quite literally that one is unwilling to think about it. The alternative to peace has been foreclosed.

In 1938 also, war for the Western democracies was unthinkable. Chamberlain and Daladier knew it: they judged their own peoples correctly, and acted accordingly. The difference between the two of them was simply this: Chamberlain had illusions about the future, and Daladier had none. The latter knew that the war would eventually have to be fought—but he also knew that this was morally impossible so long as the inarticulate mass of the French people was unprepared to accept the idea. A year later he saw no alternative to taking the plunge—but his people were still unready. The decisive difference between the war effort of the French and of the British in the first phase of the conflict was that the latter had time to wake up to the psychological necessities of warfare, while the former were overwhelmed before they were really awake. In the sense of a profound moral shift, the Second World War did not begin for the Western democracies in September of 1939, but nine months later when the British found themselves standing alone.

IT MAY be painful for us to recognize—but it is imperative that we do so if we are to face our future with a minimum of mental clarity—that what we have witnessed in the past few months among the Western European peoples has been a profound psychological change in *the opposite direction* from what occurred in Britain and what began to occur in the United States in the summer of 1940. Then the passage was from apathy to belligerence; today it is the reverse. This latter process has been in the making for quite a while. It was already apparent at least as early as the Geneva conference of two and a half years ago. For a long time now a loss of confidence within the populations of the Western coalition has imperceptibly been gaining momentum. Since the launching of Sputnik it has become a near rout.

A year after Suez and Hungary, the consequences of what the United States had done—or better, failed to do—about those two events had come home to roost. The American failure to go to the aid of the Hungarian revolution had exposed the folly of arousing false hopes through loose talk about the "liberation" of Eastern Europe. The irresponsibility of a policy that could imply such a promise, and then do nothing at all to redeem it, was something that even the hardened public relations experts of the Eisenhower administration were unable to explain away. Similarly in the case of Suez, it soon became transparently clear that the American government, by its inexplicable indecision and shifts of policy, had driven its two oldest and most important allies to an act of desperation. A few weeks afterward, the Western alliance had been restored in appearance—but the old sense of mutual confidence had all but vanished.

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Confidence and trust were no longer the same, but there remained the potent argument of America's military might. This last belief the launching of Sputnik shook up mightily: within a day or two the Soviet lead in missiles became an open secret. The result was a noiseless *sauve qui peut*. The uncommitted governments quietly drew the conclusion that the balance of power had shifted from Washington to Moscow, and made their provisions accordingly. The NATO powers behaved more politely: in form they remained committed to the American alliance, but as neutralist rumblings from their own populations grew louder, the more peripheral of them began to cast around for new formulas that would loosen the Western coalition without dissolving it entirely.

It was doubtless only the presence of President Eisenhower that saved the NATO conference at Paris from catastrophe. His trip was an act of physical courage, and as such it was quite properly applauded by the Europeans who witnessed the feat. But Eisenhower at Paris was in no position to act even as a symbol—to play the role of a Kutusov sitting half-asleep on his hill. Whatever he might symbolize no longer inspired confidence: behind him lay the image of an administration paralyzed by indecision and notably lacking in heroic resolve. Under these circumstances, all the President could do was to suggest the half-legendary chivalry of that blind old King of Bohemia who was hoisted aboard his charger to ride off to ineffectual combat at the Battle of Crécy.

Again, the devoted efforts of the administration propagandists could not conceal the vacuum in leadership that the Paris conference had brought to light. It was fortunate for the United States that Dr. Adenauer was there to serve as mediator—to bridge the gap between the policy of Secretary Dulles and that of the quasi-neutralist Scandinavians. But even Adenauer came up with nothing more substantial than a face-saving formula, trading a nearly meaningless American pledge to talk with the Russians against an equally ambiguous European pledge to talk about accepting American missile protection. Adenauer could provide stop-gap leadership, but no more. The German Chancellor rendered a last service by saving the United States from public humiliation. Yet for the alliance as a whole it was apparent that the old and familiar danger was impending—that in the face of the yawning divergencies in national attitudes which the Paris conference had revealed, it might be little more than the habit and routine of action in common that was still holding the coalition together.

So much for our present situation as seen in some sort of historical perspective. It is a grim picture, but I do not think I have overdrawn it. In brief, it is a picture of military inferiority and incompetence in leadership suddenly and brutally revealed.

Now what of the future? Obviously, as commentator after commentator has reiterated in the past four months, a policy leading from weakness is a radically different sort of thing from a policy that leads from strength. This crucial distinction our present administration appears constitutionally unable to grasp. And until they grasp it American policy will remain what it is today —vacillating, uncertain, and, on occasion, dangerously truculent.

Five imperatives, I think, logically arise out of the present situation. The first of these is to begin to tell the truth to the American people. The past five years have witnessed the apotheosis of the public relations artist: the cult of slickness and of meaninglessness has become the hallmark of the Eisenhower administration. One is even led to wonder whether the American people is any longer prepared to hear the truth—whether the intestinal strength of the nation has been so far undermined by the diet of pap on which it has been force-fed that a sudden infusion of stark fact might prove too much for it. In any case, to run this risk is better than the alternative. For the fragmentary evidence we possess suggests that the worldwide loss of confidence

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in American leadership has already begun to affect our own people. The inarticulate mass of Americans apathetic to public affairs have been deeply shaken in their self-image of technological superiority. Once the faith of these people is upset it is exceedingly hard to restore it. It is possible, indeed probable, that this country is currently undergoing a crisis of conscience as thoroughgoing as any that it has experienced since the Civil War.

Obviously the corollary to telling the stern truth is an American armaments program at a level that the current proposals do not remotely approach. The Democratic leaders in Congress were on strong ground when they insisted that even today the administration has not really awakened to the national peril. This second imperative is so apparent that it scarcely needs to be argued. The third is only superficially in conflict with it. In a situation of military inferiority—even though it may be only temporary—to keep the peace and to hold on to one's own temper are no more than common sense. Under such circumstances, a strategy of delay is unavoidable. And one of the best ways to delay is to keep talking with the potential enemy. A series of conferences—summit or otherwise—with the Soviet leaders is not likely to accomplish very much. But there is the off chance that it *may* accomplish something. Meantime the demand in Europe is so overwhelming that the United States would find itself isolated if it should choose to hold out against it.

The fourth imperative is to find some new leadership for the Western coalition and to find it quickly. The Eisenhower administration can no longer provide it. Even the most dramatic of new measures could not restore the confidence that the multiple mistakes of the past five years in foreign and military policy have forfeited. If the United States were a parliamentary state, the administration would long ago have been forced to resign.

At the same time, I am not at all sure that under its present leadership the Democratic party represents much of an alternative. On the military question its attitude is clear and purposeful. But on the wider issues of foreign policy it has little new to offer. In the recent Acheson-Kennan exchange, the former Secretary of State unquestionably came off better. In taking Kennan sharply to task for the almost mystic imprecision of his proposals for the neutralization of Central Europe, Acheson displayed once again the vigor and clarity of his own lawyer's mind. But in this as in his other recent declarations on foreign affairs, Acheson could suggest little more than a return to the diplomacy of the late 1940's. This was indeed the best period of postwar American foreign policy—a period in which the Western European nations willingly accepted an American lead that was both conciliatory and decisive. But it was also the period of Stalin's final paranoia, and of the American monopoly of atomic weapons. An overriding fear on the part of Western Europeans could find immediate reassurance in American protection. For half a decade now, these special circumstances have no longer obtained. With Stalin dead, the Europeans have breathed more easily, while since the Soviet attainment of the atomic bomb, confidence in American protection has been steadily waning. Under the circumstances of 1958, a return to the Truman-Acheson foreign policy, however successful that policy once was, is a patent impossibility.

MEANTIME, in his dreamy, ruminating fashion, George Kennan has been offering a new outline of policy that has been the sensation of the European season. The response that his BBC (Reith) lectures evoked throughout Western and Central Europe is enough in itself to suggest that American foreign policy is in need of a drastic overhauling. No doubt, as Acheson very correctly pointed out, there were dangerous elements of illusion in what Kennan seemed to expect from his neutralization scheme. But the main body of the proposal struck Europeans as the first imaginative suggestion that had come out of the United States

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in nearly a decade. Hence, like the matter of the summit conference, it deserves careful consideration: it would be folly to reject it out of hand.

In the absence of guidance from the United States, can the Europeans themselves provide the Western coalition with the new leadership it so imperatively requires? The outlook is not promising. France and Italy are under just about the weakest governments that they have had since the end of the war. In Germany, Adenauer cannot go on forever—and, in any case, it will still be many years before Europeans are ready to accept the leadership of a German. In Britain, the change from Eden to Macmillan has not been sufficient to efface the memory of Suez. Whatever may be the situation on the domestic front, in foreign policy the Conservatives are running a lame-duck administration. Right now Labor's victory at the next election seems assured.

Between Labor and the Conservatives the positions have been very nearly reversed in the past few years. At the time of its electoral defeat in 1951, Labor was grievously divided, while the Tory challengers were united and militant. Today the Conservatives are almost as uncertain as our own Republicans—torn by dissension over financial policy and shackled in foreign affairs by the imperial nostalgia of their own backbenchers. In opposition, Labor presents more of a unified front than at any period since its electoral victory of 1945. The alliance of Gaitskell and Bevan has given it the most potent team of leaders that the Western world currently affords.

If the British Labor party is fairly shortly to come to power and assume a position of leadership in the Atlantic coalition, then its attitude on foreign policy becomes of immediate relevance. This attitude is a flexible one, well calculated to reconcile the neutralist yearnings of the Continentals with the military emphasis on which the United States insists. For Labor combines a readiness to negotiate with a well-tried imperviousness to Communist blandishments. And in their assessment of the main trend of Russian foreign policy over the past decade the leaders of British Labor—along with a large number of their Conservative countrymen—have been proved only too correct.

In brief, they have insisted that the major weapon of Communist expansion has been and will continue to be not war but penetration, persuasion, and example rather than terror. And they can point to the spectacular successes of Soviet policy in the Middle East to clinch their argument. By such means, they further suggest, Communist influence will probably continue to grow in the foreseeable future. In the vast underdeveloped stretches of Asia and Africa, it will be extremely difficult to stop this sort of expansion by any of the usual techniques of American resistance to Communism. The fate of the Eisenhower Doctrine in the Middle East is a case in point. A vastly increased program of economic aid might do something—but it will always find its limits in vestigial suspicions of "colonialism."

THE fifth and last imperative, then, implicit in the current situation is to accept the above analysis and begin to act on it. For the corollary of such an assessment of the world ideological balance is a more modest notion of what Western policy can accomplish. More concretely, this sort of reasoning devotes primary attention to the possibilities of division within the Communist world itself. It is less interested in devising complex alliance-systems to deal with all possible military contingencies than in exploring the chances of gaining toeholds in the non-Soviet portions of the Communist land-mass. It is more concerned with China and Poland and Yugoslavia than with Formosa and Saudi Arabia and Spain. It stresses the feebleness of a number of the governments that rank as pillars of the anti-Communist alliance system, and argues that there is less to gain by further propping them up than by devoting expert attention to economic and ideological novelties in the more peripheral states of the Soviet bloc and in those that are currently falling under Communist influence.

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That there are sharp limits to such novelties this view of foreign policy well recognizes. Here the suppression of the Hungarian revolution was again the decisive event: it proved that change would be permitted to go as far as Gomulka, but no further. It suggested that it was the national rather than the liberal aspect of the heterodox stirrings within the Communist world that ran the better chance of permanent success. And it similarly seemed to prove that the desire to throw off Russian domination was a more compelling concern of Communist dissidents than their longing for freedom of expression. Thus it has appeared symptomatic that the Yugoslavs have found no incompatibility in refusing to go along with the recent Soviet-dictated formula of world Communist solidarity, while almost simultaneously condemning Djilas once again for his ideological deviations.

It would be incorrect, then, to see in this view of Western foreign policy a revival of a "soft" attitude toward Communism or of Popular Front illusions. Even before his recent decision to play the part of a responsible statesman, a leader such as Aneurin Bevan had long ago proved his anti-Communist reliability. And the same is true of innumerable people like him. The illusion of looking for democratic virtue within the Communist system itself is by now dead and nearly forgotten. The support or tolerance that even the more "liberal" of the Communist governments gave to the suppression of the Hungarian revolution destroyed the last traces of it. The attitude that I have been outlining is, rather, one of skepticism and careful calculation. It tries to assess realistically the current chances for Western survival in a situation in which slow deterioration has almost overnight become a major crisis of confidence.

This reassessment suggests that the United States is currently crossing the threshold of a new relation to its Western allies. And it further implies that in her relations with the Communist countries another such threshold must be crossed if the present alarming drift in world affairs is to be arrested.

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SHOULD WE NEGOTIATE NOW?

Hazards of a Summit Meeting

HANS J. MORGENTHAU

THE decline of political intelligence in the Western world has been demonstrated with particular force by the public outcry in favor of negotiations with the Soviet Union, following the revelation of Russian superiority in most departments of warfare. What is objectionable in this outcry is not the desire to negotiate, for it is axiomatic that an international conflict can be solved only in one of three ways: by war; by leaving it alone, in the hope that changed circumstances will smooth it over; or by a negotiated settlement.

What makes the present rush to negotiate so astounding is its timing and, more particularly, the almost eschatological expectations that people entertain about the prospect of a "summit meeting." If strength is a prerequisite for successful negotiations—as indeed it is—then there can hardly be a worse moment for negotiating with the Soviet Union than the present one. Today we are approaching negotiations not from strength but from obvious weakness, and it is just the recognition of our weakness which disposes us to negotiate. Ten years or even five years ago, we could have negotiated from a position as strong as any we shall be likely to command vis-à-vis the Soviet Union in the future. In those days Sir Winston Churchill put the case for a negotiated settlement in an address to the House of Commons on January 23, 1948:

> I will only venture now to say that there seems to me to be very real danger in going on drifting too long. I believe that the best chance of preventing a war is to bring matters to a head and come to a settlement with the Soviet Government before it is too late. This would imply that the Western democracies, who should, of course, seek unity among themselves at the earliest moment, would take the initiative in asking the Soviet for a settlement.

He put the same case, with even greater urgency, two years later in the House of Commons on March 28, 1950:

> But if there is a breathing space, if there is more time, as I feel and do not hesitate to say, it would be a grave mistake . . . perhaps a fatal mistake to suppose that, even if we have this interlude, it will last for ever, or even last more than a few years. Time and patience, those powerful though not infallible solvents of human difficulties, are not necessarily on our side. When the last Parliament met, I mentioned four years as the period before any other power but the United States would possess the atomic bomb. That period has already gone by, and our position is definitely worse than it was in this matter both as regards our own safety and as to the conditions which are, I believe, effectively preserving the peace of the world. . . .
>
> Therefore, while I believe there is time for a further effort for a lasting and peaceful settlement, I cannot feel that it is necessarily a long time, or that its passage will progressively improve our own security. Above all things, we must not fritter it away.

Yet fritter it away we did. In more than forty speeches Churchill raised his voice, warning and urging, but his counsel was dismissed, insofar as it was noted at all, as election propaganda. When we were as strong as we were ever likely to be vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, we refused to negotiate in earnest and waited to gain some additional strength. The terms on which we were willing to settle the German question, for example, would indeed have required a

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strength sufficient to force the Soviet Union into unconditional surrender. Yet now, when we are getting as weak as one hopes we shall ever get, we are being pushed into negotiations. A case can of course be made for such a policy on grounds of propaganda; but little can be expected of it in the way of settling the substantive issues which separate the Soviet bloc from the Western world.

However, it is perhaps unjust to judge the present clamor for negotiations by the standards of a rational foreign policy. That clamor is in essence a search for an escape from the predicament that faces the Western world. Unable to deny any longer the mortal danger in which it finds itself, it is still unwilling to shoulder the burdens and come to terms with the risks and liabilities which that danger imposes upon it. Negotiations are in relation to the Russian threat what international organization used to be to "power politics": an easy alternative which would dispose of the burdens and risks of political life by turning one's back on them. Support the United Nations and your political troubles will be over, we were told ten years ago—negotiate and you can live in peace with the Russians, we are told today.

The simplemindedness of this advice is matched by that of its counterpart: the unqualified assertion that it is impossible to negotiate with the Soviet Union. This assertion derives from the Soviet Union's practice of disregarding, with a brutal unconcern for the diplomatic niceties, treaty obligations which it deems contrary to her interests. This practice is thought to have tainted the Russian leaders with an unreliability and immorality in negotiations of which statesmen of other nations are supposed to be free. They appear to be set apart from other statesmen, as gangsters are set apart from honest men. In consequence, before one can negotiate with them, if one ever can, they must purge themselves of their vices and give tangible proof of their reformation. President Eisenhower, in his television speech of December 23, 1957, echoed the prevailing mood when he called for "clear evidence of Communist integrity and sincerity in negotiation. . . ." It hardly needs pointing out that no great power will submit to such a moral test; hence, the condition itself precludes the possibility of serious negotiations. Thus the metaphysics of negotiations at any price meets the metaphysics of negotiations at hardly any price in the same realm of utopian unreality.

In truth, negotiations with the Soviet Union are not always feasible and desirable, but neither are they always impossible and undesirable. Whether or not one should seek to negotiate is not a question to be decided by abstract conclusions derived from irrational premises. Rather it is a matter of the concrete circumstances manifesting themselves as three separate issues: who shall negotiate, under what conditions, and on what issues? Whatever the answers to these questions may be, they are bound to be, not categorical and peremptory, but tentative and provisional. Yet the answers are indeed derived from the immutable principles of foreign policy, adapted to the concrete circumstances of particular situations.

The question as to who shall negotiate resolves itself, under present circumstances, into two separate questions: Shall negotiations be conducted at the summit, or by foreign ministers, or through ordinary diplomatic channels? And shall the principal Western allies negotiate with the Soviet Union and her allies, or shall the United States face the Soviet Union alone?

A summit conference composed of heads of state or prime ministers can perform a useful function only within the context of ordinary diplomatic negotiations. The issues which are negotiable between East and West are of such a complicated technical nature that they cannot be resolved in a brief and spectacular meeting of leaders who, even if they had the wisdom, knowledge, and power to settle them, would not have the time to do so.

Within the context of ordinary diplomatic discussions, however, a summit conference can perform two important functions. It can give to a settlement reached on the diplo-

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matic level its final form, and bestow upon it the solemn approval of the nations concerned; and it can resolve a few outstanding issues by vesting concessions with an authority of which the ordinary diplomatic processes are naturally deprived. The proper place for a summit conference, then, is at the end, or close to the end, of ordinary diplomatic negotiations. To start negotiations with a summit meeting at which the national leaders either define their antagonistic positions in public, or else agree upon the desirability of permanent and universal peace, may serve the purposes of propaganda; it virtually precludes a settlement.

What holds true of summit meetings applies to a lesser degree also to foreign ministers' conferences. Publicity does not mix with negotiations on any level of social action, and publicity is inseparable from such conferences. Like summit meetings, foreign ministers' conferences can ratify solutions reached at the diplomatic level and settle issues which could not be settled at that lower level, and they can do so at more frequent intervals and for more extended periods of time. But they are no substitute, to quote Sir Winston Churchill again, for "formal diplomatic processes, with all their privacy and gravity. . . ."

WHICH nations shall participate in the negotiations? About this question there has been disagreement between the United States and the Soviet Union ever since the great conferences of the Second World War. The United States has consistently maintained that she will not enter the conference room with the Soviet Union unaccompanied by her principal allies. The Soviet Union, in turn, has as consistently defended the position that nations differ in power, hence also in influence and responsibility, and that a settlement ought to be negotiated only by those nations whose interest and power must support it. There can be no doubt that on this issue the Soviet Union has tradition and logic on her side. It is hard to see how the business of statesmanship can be carried on in any other way. Or does anyone suppose that it would have been easier for England and Russia, at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, to settle their differences (enabling Disraeli to bring home "peace with honor") if, aside from the great powers, the Bosnians, the Herzegovinians, the inhabitants of Novi Bazar, the Montenegrins, Serbians, Bulgarians, Rumanians, Greeks, Albanians, Macedonians, Cypriots, Tunisians, and Armenians had also participated in the deliberations and decisions?

It is illuminating that the concern for the equal status of her allies which the United States has so consistently voiced, has not been shared by all the allies at all times. Their overriding desire for a negotiated settlement has tended to overshadow their concern with matters of prestige and even of interest. What they have asked for, and what they are entitled to, is consultation and information. What they have been at times willing to forgo is an equality of status to which no equality of interest, power, and responsibility corresponds, especially on issues which affect not primarily the particular interests of this nation or that, but the interest of mankind in its survival.

Under what conditions shall we negotiate? At a news conference on February 12, 1950, Dean Acheson, then Secretary of State, gave an answer to this question, admirable for the lucidity of its presentation and for its intellectual grasp of at least one side of the problem. He drew a distinction between paper agreements and agreements "which register the existing facts." The former are useless, for they will be broken whenever it is in the interest of the parties concerned. In Mr. Acheson's words,

> it is not a matter of agreement but a matter of registering the existence of a situation. . . . Thus what I want to stress here is that agreements with the Soviet Union are useful when those agreements register or record an existing situation of fact, but that otherwise they are not of much use. So it has been our basic policy to build situations which will extend the area of possible agreement, that is, to create strength instead of weakness in many quarters.

Sir Winston Churchill, in his speech of January 23, 1948, made the same point, in

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characteristically terse and hopeful language.

> It is idle to reason or argue with the Communists. It is, however, possible to deal with them on a fair, realistic basis, and, in my experience, they will keep their bargains as long as it is in their interest to do so, which might, in this grave matter, be a long time, once things are settled. . . .

In other words, there is only one kind of negotiated settlement that will last—a settlement that transforms the identical or complementary interests of the contracting parties into a politically viable *modus vivendi*. When such a community of interests is either lacking at the outset or disappears some time after negotiation of the settlement, the settlement indeed becomes a "paper agreement," to be disregarded by those whose interests it does not serve. It will make no difference for the substance of the case—although it may make one for the manner of operations—that those who must thus choose between the terms of the settlement and their interests are Americans or Russians: they cannot but choose the latter over the former.

WHAT, then, are the interests out of which negotiations must fashion a viable settlement? A nation which negotiates a settlement expects either to receive benefits or avoid disadvantages, or both. The United States offers to settle the German question on the basis of free elections which would inevitably remove East Germany from Russian control. The Soviet Union offers to settle the German question by recognizing the equal status of both German governments, thus opening the door to Russian influence and subversion in all of Germany. The terms of these respective solutions are totally beneficial to one side and totally disadvantageous to the other. They preclude the possibility of a negotiated settlement and allow only of an imposed one. On the other hand, the terms on which the United States and the Soviet Union negotiated the settlement of the Berlin blockade in 1949 promised benefits and the avoidance of disadvantages to both the United States and the Soviet Union, and consequently it has proved viable.

However, it is also possible that one or the other side, while not satisfied with the terms of the settlement, will nevertheless agree to it because of the power which the other party is able to bring to bear in support of it. *A* prefers a settlement, unsatisfactory in itself, to no settlement at all, because the power of *B* threatens disadvantages greater than those to be expected from the terms of the settlement. The acquiescence of Japan, confronted with the combined power of the United States and Great Britain, to the humiliating terms of the Washington Treaty of 1922, which imposed naval inferiority upon her, is a typical instance. However, this is an extreme case. Most negotiated settlements are based on both the attractiveness of their terms and the fear of the power of one or the other or both of the contracting parties.

The United States finds herself today, for the first time in postwar history, without the power to threaten the Soviet Union with disadvantages sufficient to support whatever settlements the two nations might negotiate. What is worse for the long-term outlook for negotiations, the United States has thus far given no indication of summoning up the resolution to take the drastic measures necessary to repair its military weakness. So far as power sufficient to support a negotiated settlement is concerned, a massive and spectacular national effort at rearmament appears to be an indispensable precondition for successful negotiations in the present circumstances. Such an effort, while it could not restore the military balance of power immediately, would at least promise to do so in the future, and the Soviet Union, in anticipation of restored American power, might negotiate on terms which present American weakness makes unnecessary for her to consider. In the absence of such a national effort, with American weakness continuing and even becoming worse, the sole inducement for negotiations lies in the terms of settlement which the United States and the Soviet Union are willing to offer each

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other. Since the United States found the Soviet terms unacceptable when her power exceeded that of the Soviet Union, it is unlikely that the Soviet Union will now agree to terms which the United States would find more acceptable.

What issues are outstanding between the United States and the Soviet Union which must be examined with a view to their negotiability? Four of them are territorial in character: Europe, the Far East, the Middle East, and the uncommitted nations. Two are functional and world-wide in their implications: disarmament and the control of atomic power.

One of these issues, on the face of it, cannot be settled by negotiations, because it lies outside the control of the prospective negotiators: the issue of the allegiance of the uncommitted nations. Only these nations themselves can decide whether they will choose the Communist or the Western road to political and social stability, or else circumstances will decide for them. Nothing that the United States and the Soviet Union can do to maintain or strengthen their influence in those countries, short of outright military intervention, is susceptible to negotiation. Here we are indeed in the arena of "peaceful coexistence" where two antagonistic political and social systems compete for the allegiance of men. Legal stipulations may try to preserve the peaceful character of that competition; they cannot in the nature of things regulate that competition itself, let alone negotiate it out of existence.

IF THIS analysis is correct, then it might be worth while to explore the possibility of a negotiated settlement for one region whose nations are not yet completely, or are only provisionally, committed to one or the other side—the Middle East. The Soviet Union has repeatedly offered to negotiate a settlement which would eliminate the Middle East from the military arena and restore the situation to what it was before the Baghdad Pact of 1955. Whether such a settlement was possible in the past is a moot question. Whether it is possible today needs to be explored. It certainly does not appear impossible from the outset.

The United States and the Soviet Union have two interests in common in the Middle East. They are both interested in seeing to it that the Middle East does not strike the spark that might ignite a world conflagration; and they are interested in settling the outstanding issues that might cause such a spark. Both interests can be satisfied only through cooperation and are likely to be jeopardized by military competition. The nations of the Middle East have no resources, military or otherwise, to settle the issues dividing them by their own efforts. The solution of the issues awaits a settlement negotiated among the great powers and imposed and guaranteed by them. Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union has a stake in any particular settlement; their interests coincide in wanting any kind of a settlement which is viable. The refusal of the then Soviet foreign minister, Shepilov, to commit himself to the Arab objectives with regard to Israel, during his visit to the Arab capitals in 1956, supports this interpretation of the Russian attitude, at least as it was at that time.

But not even this highly qualified optimism applies to negotiations about the Far East and Europe. The question of the recognition of Communist China by the United States and her admission to the United Nations is but the surface symptom of the unresolved conflict in the Far East. It is doubtful whether Communist China would allow herself to be recognized by the United States, even if the latter were willing to do so without conditions, since, as time goes on, non-recognition is likely to embarrass the United States more than Communist China. Admission to the United Nations would be acceptable to Communist China only if it carried with it the abandonment of Nationalist China, and here indeed we touch the core of the Far Eastern issue. The United States has consistently followed a policy of containing Communist China militarily at the historic outlets for Chinese expansion: Formosa, Korea, Southeast Asia,

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and, more particularly, Viet Nam. The United States is not now willing to retreat from the military positions she occupies; Communist China is not prepared to recognize the legitimacy of these positions from which she is not now able to dislodge the United States. We are here, then, in the presence of a provisional *modus vivendi* whose terms are established by the existing distribution of military power and which can neither be changed nor recognized by a negotiated settlement.

IN REFLECTING upon the possibility of a negotiated settlement of the European question, one must again separate the surface arguments and solutions from the core of the problem. That core is represented by the question: should the Red Army stay where it happened to be at the end of the Second World War and where it is now —that is, in the heart of Europe, a hundred miles east of the Rhine? The Soviet Union has maintained that it ought to be there, at least as long as the armed forces of the United States are on the other side of the line of demarcation. The United States has maintained that it ought not to be there, in fact, that it ought not to be anywhere west of the Soviet frontiers. The Soviet Union has repeatedly suggested the division of Europe—and, as far as it is possible, the whole world—into two gigantic spheres of influence, one dominated by herself, the other by the United States; in particular, she has suggested the evacuation of all foreign armed forces from Europe west of the Russian frontiers. What James Reston reported from Washington in the New York *Times* of March 13, 1950, about the reaction to these spheres-of-influence proposals, now called "recognition of the status quo," has remained true to this day: ". . . there is no evidence that officials here are even slightly interested in such a deal."

Nevertheless, while the Soviet Union has an obvious interest in securing recognition of the legitimacy of her empire through a spheres-of-influence agreement, she can hardly have a serious interest in the evacuation of all foreign armed forces from Europe west of her frontiers. For while such evacuation would greatly improve the military position of the Soviet Union (at least until intercontinental guided missiles have become operational on a large scale), it would inevitably lead to the collapse of her empire, based as it is upon little more than the presence of the Red Army. These considerations apply with even greater force to proposals for the complete or partial demilitarization of Central Europe—i.e., Germany at a minimum, and certain territories adjacent to Germany in the east and west at a maximum.

These proposals for "disengagement" offer the Soviet Union very few actual military advantages, while they impose two political liabilities upon her to which she cannot be expected to agree in the present circumstances. First, they would compel the Soviet Union to surrender her political control of those territories from which she would have to withdraw her armed forces, with incalculable consequences for her rule over the rest of her empire. Secondly, and more important, the nations of Eastern Europe which would thus be released from Russian domination would not remain in this state of "liberation" for long. From the moment of their rebirth at the end of the First World War, they have had to seek the protection of one or the other of the great powers, and for many centuries before none of them was independent. For them, the choice is not between Russian domination and freedom, but between Russian domination and some other—perhaps less oppressive and obnoxious—domination. It is in the nature of things that this new master could only be Germany, united and freed from the last restraints of international control and well on her way to becoming the third most powerful nation on earth. "Disengagement" in Central Europe, then, is likely to create not a neutral, demilitarized, politically quiescent zone, but a new German empire. Faced with a choice between a Russian and a German empire in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union's decision is a foregone conclusion, and so any possibility of a negotiated neutral-

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ization of all or part of Europe falls to the ground.

The decisive argument against "disengagement" is not that it is appeasement of the Soviet Union, but—quite to the contrary—that it expects a political and military sacrifice from the Soviet Union which it is impossible for her to make in the present circumstances. However, it may be only a few years until a new technology of war will have drastically reduced the political and military value of small nations adjacent to a great power's territory. When the United States and the Soviet Union will be able to destroy each other with weapons placed on their own territories, both can afford to retreat from their forward positions, and they will then be at least in a position to discuss seriously the neutralization of Europe.

In Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union have two overriding interests in common: to prevent the domination of all of Europe by the other side, and to remove Europe from the power contest altogether. The existing division of Europe into two spheres of influence serves the former interest; the military evacuation of Europe in the wake of a new technology of warfare —with the exception perhaps of symbolic land forces on either side of the present line of demarcation—will serve both. The nations of Europe have two interests in common which coincide with those of the superpowers: to preserve or restore their national identity, and to protect themselves from an atomic war which they could not wage but in which they could only suffer. These interests, too, would be served by the military neutralization of Europe.

The possibility of a negotiated settlement of the European question at some future time is predicated upon the preservation of the bi-polarity of atomic power: that is, this possibility would disappear if European nations acquired the ability to wage any kind of atomic war—tactical or strategic—on their own. Atomic weapons in the hands of European governments would at once commit the vital interests of the United States and the Soviet Union more deeply than ever to Europe. The possibility of a negotiated European settlement is therefore intimately connected with disarmament and the control of atomic power.

DISARMAMENT as a general proposition, divorced from a settlement of the political conflicts which have caused the armaments race and, therefore, the need for disarmament in the first place, is as futile as its attraction seems to be ineradicable. There is not the slightest chance—in the light of both logic and historical experience—for negotiations to succeed which approach disarmament as though it were an independent technical problem composed of a number of separate issues, such as the number, quality, and location of weapons, the number and quality of armed forces, the modalities of inspection and other controls. This has been said so often that it is tiresome to repeat it.

It may be pointed out in passing that the current proposals for the international control of outer space, as part of a negotiated settlement, can only be propaganda devices. In the present stage of technology, it is no more possible to establish international control over outer space than it would have been for a nation or group of nations to control the high seas in the 15th century. However, one can imagine the international regulation of space through the allocation of orbits to different nations, after the model of the regulation of maritime and air traffic. But such an agreement would have nothing in common with control or disarmament in outer space.

Disarmament has proved viable, however, when it either followed a political settlement or was negotiated as an integral part of one. It so happens that the European settlement here envisaged as a future possibility is inseparable from a disarmament agreement limited to the nations of Europe and to the American and Russian forces stationed there. While such an agreement might be possible in the future as an expression of the common interests of the United States, the Soviet Union, and the nations of Europe, and as part of a political settlement translating those

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interests into action, no such hope can be entertained for the disarmament negotiations which the United States and the Soviet Union have been conducting in the United Nations. Their failure is foreordained by the concentration of the negotiators upon the symptoms of the disease—the technicalities of the armaments race—rather than on its cause: the unresolved political conflict.

Yet even an agreement on limited disarmament will be impossible to negotiate once the so-called fourth-nation problem has got out of hand and an indefinite number of nations in Europe and elsewhere come to possess atomic weapons. As I wrote in the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* more than two years ago:

> Atomic power, monopolistically controlled by the United States and the Soviet Union and keeping each other's destructive capability in check, is a force for peace, however precarious. Atomic power, haphazardly distributed among a number of nations, is bound to be a source of unprecedented insecurity, if not of panic. . . . Compared with the anarchy and limitless violence which then will reign, the first decade of the atomic era might well appear in retrospect as a kind of golden age in which the atomic stalemate between two nations guaranteed an uneasy atomic peace.

Here the interests of the United States, the Soviet Union, and all the other nations of the world most manifestly coincide. A negotiated settlement which would satisfy these interests would have to revive both the idea underlying the Acheson-Baruch-Lilienthal proposals of 1946—i.e., the supranational control of the atomic power possessed by nations other than the two superpowers—and the idea underlying the Charter of the United Nations—i.e., the exercise of control over matters upon which the peace and order of the world depend, by the nations which have the power to exercise it.

The willingness of the United States and the Soviet Union at least to face this supreme issue in common will indeed provide the iron test of their willingness to negotiate in earnest on anything. If the United States and the Soviet Union should prove unable to negotiate on an issue that so manifestly affects their physical survival, it is difficult to see how they could negotiate, let alone agree on, less urgent and less obviously vital issues. Nor, one must add, is it easy to see how a settlement of these minor issues could matter so long as the overriding issue of the supranational control of atomic power remains unsolved. For who can care whether a divided or a united Germany will be atomized, or whether a Formosa ruled by Chiang Kai-shek or Mao Tse-tung will be laid to waste?

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THE MILITARY STALEMATE

Strategic Thinking Lags Behind Technology

DENIS HEALEY

SINCE defeat in war is still regarded as the worst of all possible evils, the West's general posture in a period of coexistence is bound to be determined primarily by the prevailing assumptions on the nature of the military threat and the measures most appropriate to counter it. These assumptions must govern not only the nature and composition of the alliances which are the core of Western diplomacy, but also the amount of resources available for non-military purposes at home and abroad.

Yet the hard fact is that the West has so far failed to reach agreement on these fundamental assumptions. Disagreement on the central issues of grand strategy is rife not only among the various allied governments—it is corroding the unity of purpose within each particular nation. The outdated division of the armed services into land, sea, and air forces means that it is difficult to get an integrated assessment even of technical military problems; decisions are taken according to the influence which the individual services can exert, or even worse, by making a formal compromise between views which are fundamentally incompatible.

The confusion is compounded by the failure of all the Western governments to integrate their military and diplomatic policies at the planning stage—if there ever is a real planning stage at all. A tendency has developed for each department to evade serious thinking about future problems by alleging the objections of other departments as an insuperable obstacle to change. In Britain, for example, during the discussions on evacuation of the Suez base in 1953-54, the Foreign Office used to argue that Suez was regarded as indispensable by the military, while the War Office stated that its evacuation would produce intolerable political consequences throughout the Middle East. Similarly, discussions on the possibility of disengagement in Central Europe have bogged down, with the military planners arguing that disengagement would be a political disaster, whereas the diplomats claim that it would make it strategically impossible to defend Western Europe.

From this swamp of inertia, lines of conduct have emerged which are not only inadequate to deal with the real problems, but are also self-contradictory. The popular revolt against current Western policy, so evident in the European reaction to Mr. George Kennan's Reith Lectures and in the pressure for "summit" talks, is a sign that these contradictions are becoming apparent to the man in the street. At present the problem is most acute in NATO itself, where the United States, Britain, and Germany are each pursuing incompatible strategic concepts for the defense of Europe, while France does nothing at all. Meanwhile, the peoples responsible for supplying NATO with the manpower and money required for their defense have gone on strike—and who can blame them? Their leaders have failed to define the military purposes for which these sacrifices are required, and failed still more to show what is the precise relation between military purposes and political ends. The British ambassador to NATO, Sir Frank Roberts, nicely illustrated the present chaos when he told American correspondents in Paris last December that although ground troops must play some part in NATO

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strategy, many people in Britain considered it quite arbitrary whether the number of divisions in Germany was x or y.

Through all this muddle it is possible to pick out certain major assumptions which, whether conscious or not, play a leading role in current Western defense policy, and which are dangerously imperfect if not actually wrong. The basic notion that has guided all Western thinking since the defeat of Germany and Japan is that the danger of war arises, above all, from a calculated act of major aggression by the Soviet Union or another Communist state under her influence. A second assumption is that such an act can best be prevented through a policy of deterrence, i.e., by the threat of all-out war. Instead of proving its capacity to defend a threatened area against invasion, the West, it is held, must prove its will and power to respond to a local aggression by inflicting massive nuclear retaliation on the power behind the aggression, whether it be Russia or China.

The assumption that a major Communist attack is likely, and can only be deterred by the threat of massive retaliation, has led the West to allot first priority in its defense policy to the development and production of the most destructive nuclear weapons and the least vulnerable delivery systems for them. Moreover, since this policy assumes that Russia can be convinced that massive retaliation will follow any major aggression, it must also assume that any major Soviet aggression will start with an all-out attack on Western retaliatory power, which means that the only sort of major aggression possible is total global war. Here there are two further implications: first, that there is no point in preparing for anything but a total response to major aggression; and second, that Western retaliatory power must be sufficient to inflict fatal destruction on Russia, even *after* the enemy has struck the first blow.

These assumptions have now influenced Western policy for some time. On the other hand, little thought has been given to the question: how massive must retaliation be to deter the other side from starting an all-out war? There is evidence to suggest that the weight of retaliation envisaged by the Pentagon is out of all proportion to any rational end, if it is not actually self-defeating. General Gavin told a United States Senate committee in 1956 that "current planning estimates" ran into hundreds of millions of deaths extending from the Soviet Union to Japan if the wind was in the prevailing quarter, and stretching well back into Western Europe if the wind happened to be in the other direction. It has also been stated that an American air strike at the Soviet atomic installations round Lake Baikal in Central Asia would expose millions of people in India to death by fall-out. It is difficult to believe that retaliation on this scale, involving colossal suffering for allies and neutrals as well as enemy populations, is morally justified or politically necessary for any purpose whatever.

Moreover, retaliation on this scale would involve major radiation hazards for the people of the United States itself—indeed for the whole of humanity. Though the experts are still arguing, it is generally agreed that there is a biological threshold beyond which the average human being cannot tolerate radiation. Many scientists believe that the explosion of three hundred megaton weapons of the Bikini type would produce general atmospheric pollution exceeding this threshold, in addition to the more localized fall-out of heavier particles in areas within hundreds of miles of the explosions. No doubt this is one of the reasons why America and Britain are now trying to develop "clean" megaton weapons.

MILITARY power on this scale comes near to implying military impotence, since the risks of employing it are too great to be accepted in anything but the last extremity of national survival. And now that the Soviet Union has acquired the capacity to respond in kind to this type of massive retaliation, with aircraft and missiles which can reach American territory, the risks have turned into certainties. The existence of a

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stalemate or stand-off at the level of all-out thermonuclear war is now generally accepted. This has had immediate consequences for Western military policy which threaten to undermine the very roots of the Atlantic alliance. There is a growing reluctance in the United States to rely on massive retaliation as a means of protecting America's allies; instead there is a search for an alternative deterrent, in the capacity for limited atomic war. This trend has received official public expression in Mr. Dulles's article "Challenge and Response in U. S. Foreign Policy" in the October 1957 number of *Foreign Affairs*. It has been a prominent theme in most of the recent unofficial reports on American security, and its public appeal was dramatically demonstrated by the welcome accorded last summer to Henry A. Kissinger's book *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*.

America's evident reluctance to put her own capacity for "massive retaliation" automatically at the disposal of her allies—the Strategic Air Command has never been part of NATO—has in turn led these allies to seek some air-atomic capacity for themselves. Moreover, total dependence on America's defense forces sets intolerably rigid limits to allied freedom in the diplomatic sphere as well. Of late, the centrifugal tendencies encouraged by America's wish to limit her strategic liabilities, and Europe's resulting desire for greater strategic independence, have been greatly strengthened by America's reaction to the Soviet earth satellites. To an outside observer it appears that all those interest groups in the United States which benefited by over-reliance on massive retaliation have seized on the Sputnik in the hope of reversing the trend toward a more balanced strategy. They have argued that unless America increases the proportion of her defense budget which is devoted to massive retaliation, Russia may turn the thermonuclear stalemate into a checkmate, by acquiring the capacity to eliminate the whole of America's retaliatory force through a combination of surprise attack on its bases and air defense against those bombers which escape the surprise attack. Though all the evidence is against it, the political success of this argument was shown by the 1958 U. S. budget proposals which put almost the whole of a three billion dollar increase in defense expenditure into the development and production of more efficient retaliatory power—mainly missiles—at the expense of a further cut in service manpower of 83,000 and an over-all cut in army spending of 163 million dollars.

America's new emphasis on increasing her retaliatory capacity has shifted the balance of power inside the Atlantic alliance. Since she does not expect to have intercontinental missiles in operation for several years, the U. S. apparently feels it essential to have bases for her intermediate-range missiles on the territory of her European allies—though even these missiles will not be available in less than a year or two. America's urgent need for missile bases has in turn greatly strengthened the bargaining power of her allies in demanding their own strategic weapons. Britain led the way by insisting that she receive missiles for herself, in return for granting bases for American missiles, while an amendment of the MacMahon Act has been promised to make possible the distribution of atomic weapons to America's allies. In any case, Britain and France are now engaged in producing atomic weapons for themselves. Thus each of the major powers in the Western alliance is now seeking security primarily by strengthening its individual capacity for massive retaliation.

BECAUSE the Western governments have deliberately chosen to seek military security by posing the maximum risk of all-out war both to the Soviet Union and to themselves, they are involved in an arms race of a peculiarly frustrating kind. The cost and speed of weapons development has become fantastically high. Professor Klaus Knorr, in his recent pamphlet "The Crisis in U. S. Defense," gives a vivid picture of the appalling problems of choice which face a nation determined to outmatch its enemy at a time of rapid technological change. In

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real terms, Russia's defense budget is not higher than that of the United States, although it represents more than double the proportion of her gross national product. But quite apart from the fact that Russia probably gets more military return for her money, uncertainty about her capabilities now and in the future would compel the United States to spend a substantially higher sum on defense to insure against possible errors of prediction. And even then it would be impossible to feel really secure against some unforeseen technological breakthrough—a fear greatly strengthened by Russia's success with the Sputnik.

For this reason, the search for superiority in all-out war is so expensive that it must lead to a steady decline in the capacity for limited war. If this is the case for the wealthiest country in the world, it is very much more true of America's allies. Britain has already found that it is impossible to build even the most marginal capacity for massive retaliation without a severe contraction in her existing overseas commitments and the reduction of her land forces by well over half. Indeed, she had to tell NATO that she would be unable to maintain any troops in Germany unless someone else paid the £50 million ($140 million) required to support them there (though this is a sum which was simultaneously described by the Prime Minister as too trifling to justify the resignation of his Chancellor!). France, which is now racing all out to explode her first atomic weapon, contributes nothing to the NATO armies because of the Algerian war, yet has decided to cut service manpower by another 150,000. Meanwhile Germany, with no overseas commitments whatever, still feels sufficiently confident of America's readiness to blow up the world on her behalf, to see no urgency in the production of her own ground forces.

As long as the West clings to the basic assumption that the main danger is a major Soviet aggression, massive retaliation is likely to remain the core of its defense policy —the only new factor being irresistible European pressure for an independent share in this capacity. So far as the European allies are concerned, "limited" atomic war is likely to be politically unacceptable as an alternative, even if its military feasibility can be proved. The European peoples inevitably see the concept of limited atomic war as an American device to confine the destruction to allied territory, while maintaining the United States and Russia as privileged sanctuaries. Moreover, limited atomic war is possible only so long as each side possesses the capacity to meet any enemy extension of the conflict by a parallel extension on its own part. To put it bluntly, limited atomic war depends on the capacity for massive retaliation existing in the background. But if the only member of an alliance with this capacity is the one furthest from the scene of fighting, that power is likely to accept types of limitation intolerable to the countries on the battlefield. In the tactical atomic exercises "Carte Blanche" and "Sage Brush," for example, the American planners envisaged a scale of nuclear destruction in the battle area which would certainly be unacceptable to Western Germany.

Thus the European allies are unlikely to accept a NATO strategy of limited atomic war unless they have some strategic nuclear weapons in their own possession as a means of enforcing limits which they could tolerate. But if they have strategic nuclear weapons they might as well rely wholly on their own capacity for "massive retaliation," rather than experiment with the dubious refinements of "limited atomic war." An allied country does not need many strategic weapons for this purpose, since their main function is not so much to inflict intolerable damage on the Soviet Union, as to trigger off the whole of the allied retaliatory force. It is impossible to label a hydrogen bomb "a present from Germany" or "a present from Britain." If one single bomb explodes in Soviet territory, the likelihood that Russia will respond by all-out attack on the whole of the allied base system is great enough to set the Strategic Air Command immediately in motion. In the past, the fact

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that America retained sole control of the machinery for massive retaliation, however much it may have weakened the deterrent, at least gave the NATO alliance confidence that the supreme sanction would not be invoked except under extreme provocation. But as the power to impose race suicide becomes more widely distributed, membership in the alliance may seem to involve risks out of all proportion to the security it confers—particularly for the United States herself and for the smaller countries which are the last to obtain a share in the ultimate deterrent.

It is impossible to see any way out of this predicament short of a total fusion of sovereignties. No juridical machinery for joint control by a number of sovereign governments can work in practice. The physical responsibility for firing the strategic weapons lies with small groups of men who as air crew or missile team must be able to take irrevocable action in the few minutes' gap between warning that the Soviet missile has left its launching site, and the moment when that missile may explode on their base. They will have no time for consulting their own governments, much less the allied authorities as a whole. Thus the present trend of Western defense policy threatens to disintegrate the Atlantic alliance into an anarchy of independent thermonuclear powers incapable of responding to any military challenge except by destroying the human race. It was because they sensed the imminence of this catastrophe that the smaller powers at the NATO Council meeting last December insisted on calling a halt for reflection before the Rubicon was crossed in force.

WESTERN defense policy has reached a dead end in more senses than one. Is there really no alternative to this steady march into the abyss? Or is there some defect in the reasoning which has already brought the world so far toward disaster? It would seem that, insofar as Western defense policy has been rationally calculated, it is its basic assumptions which are mistaken. The megaton missile has introduced a revolutionary new factor into the equations on which military policy has been based for the past two thousand years, but Western thinking remains fixed in the old patterns.

There are in particular two myths which determine the approach of the major Western powers to defense problems, both dangerously mistaken in the atomic age. The first is a belief that a great power can achieve absolute security against an enemy whose will to aggression is held to be absolute. Thus it is a maxim of the Western staffs that defense policy should be related to the enemy's military capacity, which can to a large extent be known, rather than to his intentions, which cannot be known for certain, and may change in any case. Yet the illusion that absolute security is possible has already been exploded. It is now universally accepted that there is no complete defense against modern nuclear weapons and that security must depend on deterrence instead. But in shifting from defense to deterrence, the West maintains its determination to establish a net superiority over its enemy in military power, although at the level of all-out thermonuclear war "superiority" in itself has no meaning.

The desire for a net superiority at any given level of armaments is fortified by a second myth which has become established among the democratic powers at least for the last fifty years—namely, the belief that war is the end of policy and not its continuation. In peacetime the democracies try to relate means to ends which are calculated more or less rationally in terms of national interest. By contrast, they tend to regard war as a sort of game which must be played through until one side or the other has won victory, regardless of the cost. The idea of unconditional surrender is peculiarly tempting to democracies, since ordinary men and women cannot be persuaded to kill one another except in a cause which can be represented as a crusade of absolute good against absolute evil. Thus the natural aim of a democratic defense policy is to acquire the capacity for inflicting total defeat, or un-

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conditional surrender, on the enemy. But this aim, too, has been completely stultified by modern weapons. There can be no meaningful victory in all-out thermonuclear war—yet all-out thermonuclear war must follow any attempt to impose unconditional surrender on a power which possesses thermonuclear weapons.

In short, the search for absolute security through relative superiority in military force is doomed to failure by the existence of absolute weapons on each side. To this extent the arms race is self-defeating. The problem today is to relate military means to political ends, and the side which does this most successfully may succeed in imposing its will on the other—particularly if the other has committed itself so completely to a strategy of deterrence by all-out war that it has no rational military response available for any challenge which does not justify race suicide. What strikes one most about recent Western writing on defense problems is the failure to place them in their over-all political context (Mr. Robert Osgood's *Limited War* is an impressive exception to the rule). By assuming the existence of an enemy who is prepared to use whatever force he has available for aggression as an end in itself, the West creates problems for itself which are genuinely insoluble.

Is it reasonable to assume that the Soviet Union does have an absolute will to military aggression which can be deflected only by the threat of total annihilation? On the contrary, all the evidence since 1917 shows that the Soviet rulers relate military means to political ends more carefully than any other government in history—and in this the Chinese Communists are completely at one with them. They do not need the prospect of total victory to start a war, nor the prospect of total defeat to win one. In both Communist theory and practice, a commitment to limited war aims runs parallel with a commitment to limited means of warfare. The Russian leaders use force as an instrument of policy only when they feel convinced that this will bring a net political gain—and they calculate the gain in the broadest terms, including the effect of their action on public opinion in neutral countries. At the present time, when they see their major possibilities for expansion in neutral Asia and Africa, they are likely to be particularly careful not to offend against the Bandung non-aggression principles which they have formally accepted, except in situations so ambiguous that they can present their action as a response to intolerable provocation, or as the defense of a national movement against "aggressive imperialism." Thus the problem for the West in deterring Soviet aggression (besides avoiding such equivocal positions) is to make the Russians pay more for an act of aggression than they can hope to gain by it. Victory in the abstract sense should be as irrelevant for the West as it is for the Russians.

In general terms, the West must seek a defense policy which will enable it to impose costs on the aggressor out of proportion to what he can gain by continuing the fight, at a price which is smaller for the West than that of allowing the aggression to proceed—both equations taking full account of the impact of events on peoples outside the particular area of conflict. There is nothing revolutionary about this conception of defense. It has always underlain the military policy of small or neutral powers; it explains why even today Sweden feels it worthwhile to make sacrifices for defense, although she could not conceivably defeat any major aggressor. What is new is that the range and destructiveness of modern weapons make it today also the best policy for great powers, and for large alliances.

At this point it is necessary to examine another assumption of Western defense policy—that the main danger of war arises from the possibility of deliberate major aggression by the Soviet Union or countries under her control. This may have been true in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, when the whole area round Russia's borders was a political and military vacuum, and the United States was hoping to return to "normalcy." It is certainly not

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true today. With all the dangerous imperfections I have noted, the balance of terror between Russia and America at the thermonuclear level makes major aggression by the Soviet Union most unlikely. The real danger lies in the outbreak of a local conflict for which neither of the great powers bears direct responsibility, yet which involves their interests or prestige in such a way as to drag them in. Two such conflicts occurred in 1956—the rising of the Hungarian people, and the Suez affair.

Some commentators have been tempted to conclude from these events that Russia and the United States can each be relied upon to "keep order" in its own sphere of influence—the Anglo-French surrender to American pressure was as complete as the Hungarian surrender to Soviet tanks! But appearances are misleading. It is impossible to see how the United States could intervene effectively at present to stop a war, for example, among the Arab states and Israel —a war which needs only one particular incident to start it off. And if a rising took place in Eastern Germany at a time when the West German army possessed its own atomic weapons, Russia and the West would face problems for which Hungary provides no precedent. To put it broadly, instability in areas on the frontier between Russia and the West now presents far greater military dangers than the possibility of deliberate Soviet aggression. Moreover, a military posture which is aimed primarily at deterring a calculated Russian aggression by the threat of massive retaliation can be used neither to deter a local conflict of this type nor to deal with the terrifying problems which will arise once it has broken out.

The dangers inherent in a conflict arising from local instability will assume hair-raising proportions as atomic weapons are more widely spread. Even if the United States reverses its present policy of supplying atomic weapons to its allies, a growing number of countries will soon be capable of making them independently. France and Sweden may be the next in line. Israel is an obvious candidate. It has been reckoned that the plutonium produced in civilian reactors outside America, Britain, and Russia will rise from 250 kilograms in 1960 to 1,000 kilograms in 1970—probably enough to make 100 hydrogen bombs, even if techniques do not meanwhile improve! More and more, the problem of controlling this development is likely to take priority (at least in America and Russia) over the problems arising out of the cold war.

How then can the West best adapt its defense policies to meet the Soviet military threat as it really exists in practice, and the problems which may arise from instability in sensitive regions such as the Middle East and Central Europe? In the strictly military field, the West needs a more flexible military establishment and doctrine which will enable it to respond to any challenge by means not out of proportion to the importance of the issue at stake. The effectiveness of a deterrent depends on the certainty of its application as much as on its severity if applied. Now that "massive retaliation" means suicide for the country which initiates it, it cannot be considered a certain response to any challenge which does not directly threaten the survival of the country possessing that capacity. To use the fashionable jargon, the West must provide itself with a spectrum of strategic options stretching continuously from the bayonet to the megaton missile. I believe it is important that the spectrum should be fairly continuous—that there should not at any stage be too big a gap between one mode of warfare and the next. Mr. Kennan's recent strategic proposals, for example, would offer the West only two options—local resistance by the peripheral countries to an enemy occupation, and all-out thermonuclear war by the countries in the rear. In my view this is quite unrealistic. Apart from the fact that no people can be persuaded in peacetime to base its military preparations on the assumption that if war comes it must confine itself to resisting the enemy after he has occupied the country, an enemy possessing a wider "spectrum" of military possibilities would

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be able to enforce his will by threats and blackmail.

If it is accepted that the aim of a defense policy is to impose intolerable costs on the aggressor in whatever field he may choose to make his challenge, the total capacity required by the West in each field of warfare may well be much smaller than at first sight appears. At the level of all-out war, for example, it is not necessary to pose the threat of "almost total destruction"—to quote the U. S. Senate Preparedness Subcommittee. It is impossible to conceive of anything the Soviet rulers might hope to gain in war which would be worth the destruction of, say, ten of their major cities. The same argument is true at lower levels of warfare. Moreover, so long as there remains any uncertainty whatever about the feasibility of maintaining tolerable limitations in any particular campaign, the risk of an extension in the conflict greatly reinforces the deterrent. It follows that as long as the West feels sufficiently confident of keeping the war within limits, the residual uncertainty about *maintaining* these limits works wholly to the Western advantage. Mr. Dulles had this point well in mind when he argued (in his *Foreign Affairs* article already cited) that so long as the West can convince Russia of its readiness to respond to any aggression by limited atomic war, it faces the Russians with the choice of either doing nothing, or themselves initiating limited atomic war, with all the military risks and political odium such a course must carry.

To put it another way, the capacity for limited war at various levels not only provides a possible alternative to "massive retaliation" if war breaks out, but reinforces the threat of massive retaliation as a deterrent in peacetime. The "tactical" atomic weapons at present in Western Europe do have this double role in NATO strategy. Indeed, from this point of view, the element of unpredictable irrationality inseparable from democratic politics—though we should aim to reduce it for our own sakes—is a weapon in the Western diplomatic armory as valuable as the calculated ambiguity of Soviet initiatives. The very fact that, once a democracy is engaged in fighting, it tends to push the war to geographical and military extremes, will make the Soviet Union most reluctant to step at any time on to the escalator which may ride up to all-out thermonuclear war. Mr. Dulles's use of "brinkmanship" probably frightened the Russians as much as it frightened his allies, because they really thought he might be mad enough to do what he threatened. Even before that, Korea was a conclusive warning to the Soviet Union. For in this case they seemed to have been given an implied assurance by the U. S. Commander in Chief, General MacArthur, and the Secretary of State, Mr. Acheson, that the United States would not intervene if South Korea were invaded. The shock of President Truman's apparent volte-face must have been traumatic.

The one vital requirement of Western policy is to make it clear that there will always be some military response to a military challenge. This need not always mean a full-fledged military alliance with a country under Soviet pressure—indeed the Western powers may have much more freedom to choose the appropriate military response if they are not always under obligation to the country attacked to fight the war in the way which suits it best. Despite their other weaknesses, declarations of intent like the Truman and Eisenhower Doctrines may have military advantages over formal alliances, providing it is known that the United States does possess appropriate means of fulfilling them. The presence of American troops on a threatened frontier is far less indispensable than many Europeans have come to believe. With American backing, Turkey stood up to Soviet threats during the recent Syrian crisis, though the Red Army could have invaded Turkish soil without killing a single American soldier. Modern weapons allow an unprecedented flexibility in strategy to which diplomacy has not yet adapted itself.

The distinctive feature of modern weapons, compared with any in the past, is that they have unlimited range and that they in-

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volve destruction out of all proportion to potential gain. If these facts are fully exploited, it should be theoretically possible to eliminate war as an instrument of policy. This is particularly relevant for countries like the Soviet Union and the United States, which have nearly all the resources they need within their existing frontiers, and which can best increase their power and influence by applying brains and organization to these resources. Perhaps the most important lesson of the Sputnik sensation last fall, a lesson which may have profound consequences for Soviet foreign policy in the long run, is that Russia can change the balance of power more effectively, and at vastly less risk and cost to herself, by exploiting the men and materials inside her existing borders than by using force to extend her frontiers.

THE situation is very different for some other countries, which find their present condition intolerable for economic or political reasons and might risk using force to change it if they had the means to do so. It is in conflict initiated by such countries that the main danger of war resides today—a danger which might well escape all possibility of control once these countries obtain atomic weapons. Is it possible that the existing nuclear powers will realize their common interest in preventing the further distribution of atomic weapons and controlling the areas of instability between them while there is yet time? This is a problem which raises issues far wider than those I am trying to adumbrate in this article. But I believe that the revolution wrought by modern weapons increases the possibility as well as the urgency of solving it. In the first place, long-range weapons reduce the strategic importance of the areas between America and Russia—for insofar as either side fears all-out attack by the other, it is more concerned about intercontinental air power than invasion overland. Secondly, a strategy of "graduated deterrence," in the broad sense which I propose, can be used to protect a neutral country perhaps even more easily than an ally. In the third place, the economic problems involved for even America and Russia in continuing the arms race create an unprecedented incentive for agreeing on a system of arms limitation and control. But neither of the great powers is likely to trust a system of inspection in its own territory, unless it has satisfied itself of that system's adequacy through a pilot scheme in the territory of third powers.

These three factors combine with political arguments to strengthen the case for attempting to establish joint control over the major areas of instability through the neutralization of Central Europe and the Middle East. The direct confrontation of Russian and American forces along a clearly defined frontier after 1945 was a guarantee of peace when the main danger was calculated aggression by the Soviet Union. Now that the main danger is of a local conflict initiated by third parties, this confrontation sharpens the threat of an unnecessary all-out war.

Yet the West will find it difficult to make any progress toward producing a more stable position in the major areas of tension, and insuring that the inevitable changes take place without violent explosions, unless it first establishes a military doctrine more flexible and rational than the confused and one-sided posture it maintains at present. Science has provided governments with a range of weapons so complete in its variety that there can be no excuse in future for failing to relate military means to political ends. For the first time in history, mankind has the opportunity to eliminate war as an instrument of policy. The power of decision rests at present with two or three governments at most, none of which has anything to gain by waiting. Will they show the strength of will and the political insight required to grasp their opportunity while it still exists?

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MOSCOW'S AIMS HAVE NOT CHANGED

Khrushchev's "Peace Offensive" Imperils NATO

G. F. HUDSON

ALL but ten years have now passed since the commencement of the Soviet blockade of West Berlin. That was a crisis which involved the Soviet Union and the Western powers in a more direct and nearly belligerent conflict than anything that has happened since. Looking back on it with the hindsight we have in 1958, we can appreciate by how narrow a margin the West then succeeded in holding its ground and how disastrous would have been the consequences of yielding.

The political trend in London and Washington during the first phase of the blockade was towards surrender. It was generally considered unlikely that West Berlin could be supplied for long by means of an air lift, and if it could not be, the only choice was between handing over the city to the Russians or trying to break through by force from West Germany—a course which found no majority support among Western statesmen at that time. In the event, as we all know, the air lift was successful, and the Russians flinched from the final step of shooting down the transports; thus the West gained a defensive victory, and in the following year the resistance to Soviet political pressure in Central Europe was consolidated by the conclusion of the North Atlantic alliance. Since then, in spite of all the discords of the cold war, there has been no serious violation of the boundaries either of what has now become the German Federal Republic or of the Western occupation sectors of Berlin.

It is worth while today recalling these events because we have entered a new phase of Soviet-Western relations which bears a strong resemblance to the situation in the spring of 1948. This time there has not so far been any direct attempt to force the Western powers out of Berlin, but since the hoisting of the Sputnik into outer space an atmosphere of menace similar to that of 1948 has been created and has produced similar psychological reactions. There is widespread among the Western peoples a sense of crisis and urgency, a feeling that, unless agreement can quickly be reached with Russia, something dreadful is going to happen. The enormous impression made on men's minds everywhere by the first Sputnik has been followed up by a highly publicized diplomatic offensive combining boasts, warnings, and appeals for negotiations "at the summit" to relieve international tension. From a survey of Soviet official and semi-official utterances since the Kremlin abruptly and truculently broke off the disarmament negotiations five months ago, it is evident that the Soviet leaders are trying to use their suddenly revealed new strength to bounce the Western powers out of the political and strategic positions they have held ever since the NATO coalition was formed. It is no less evident that these tactics, when brought to bear on a state of popular feeling weary of the cold war and deeply scared by forecasts of the horrors of nuclear bombardment, have had a considerable measure of success on the home fronts of Western governments.

In reality, the advent of the intercontinental ballistic missile has by no means produced a radical change in the strategic situation. For several years now the NATO and Soviet blocs have had the capacity to inflict the most frightful, if not annihilating, devastation on each other with atomic or hydro-

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gen bombs from piloted aircraft. Theoretically the bomber can be intercepted by the defense, whereas the stratospheric missile (so far) cannot; but in practice enough bombers would probably get through to inflict calamitous blows, and their aim against particular targets would almost certainly be far more accurate than that of long-range missiles is likely to be for a long time to come. The Sputnik and its missile sister have thus neither made the prospect of all-out nuclear warfare substantially more terrible than it was before, nor have they significantly increased Russia's chances of winning such a contest—insofar as it can be expected that either side could be a winner in the traditional sense of winning a war. But subjectively, vast numbers of people have become convinced that the prospect of war has been rendered far more appalling by the arrival of the intercontinental missile and that Russia has gained a great advantage over the West, so that it is now urgently necessary to come to terms with Moscow, even at the cost of far-reaching concessions to Soviet demands.

POLITICALLY, there has been no change in the situation in Central Europe which should make Western governments more anxious than they have been over the last ten years to reach agreement with the Soviet Union on any terms which do not conform to their basic principles. The division of Europe remains as it has been since the immediate postwar period, with Germany divided and Communist regimes in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary; the line of demarcation between the two worlds is the one which has existed since the victors of the Second World War took over their zones of military occupation amid the ruins of Hitler's Reich, and the risks of a military clash on that line are neither greater nor less than they have been for the past dozen years. Neither side will cross the line in force unless it deliberately seeks a major war, for each side knows that the violation must immediately and automatically involve large-scale hostilities between the great powers. The situation is tense, yet it is stable, because the spheres of power are clearly defined, the forces of the great powers are directly committed, and there cannot be any reasonable doubt what would be the consequences of a forward move in either direction.

It is nevertheless the aim of Soviet propaganda to persuade people that this situation is intolerably dangerous and must be altered forthwith. Things cannot go on as they are, we are told, without an explosion. But what is it proposed to substitute for the present state of affairs? Khrushchev put forward his idea of a substitute in his television broadcast to America last year when he said that, if all American forces were withdrawn from Europe, Russian forces would likewise be withdrawn within the frontiers of the Soviet Union, and the world would then see that the Kadar regime in Hungary would "flourish for ages to come." In this proposal he indicated the supreme objective of Soviet foreign policy, which is to bring about the removal of American troops and bases from Europe. Closely linked with this purpose is Khrushchev's unwavering insistence that the reunification of Germany must be effected not by free national elections—which would inevitably leave the Communists as a small minority in Germany as a whole—but through a confederation of the two existing states, which would make the reunited Germany a monstrous and unstable combination of democratic and totalitarian elements, with the Communist party and its officials as a privileged body under Russian protection. The attainment of these two objectives, taken together, would be sufficient to give the Soviet dictatorship what has so far eluded it—an effective domination of Europe, Western as well as Eastern. It is no wonder that Khrushchev thinks his prestige success with the Sputnik has given him a golden opportunity to launch a diplomatic offensive and exploit dismay and despondency in the West in order to get a decisive revision of the European balance of power in his favor.

There is all the difference in the world between an overland and an overseas dis-

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engagement of forces. If the Russian army were to withdraw to Brest-Litovsk, it could move forward again at any time across the North European plain with the full speed of modern mechanized formations. But if the American units now stationed in Europe were to be pulled back across the Atlantic, it would be a fatally slow and difficult business to bring them again to Europe in an emergency, whatever might be the policy of the U.S. government in relation to an outbreak of war in Europe. The defense of Western Europe by the Atlantic community requires as its basic condition the permanent presence of sizable American and British components on the Continent, with their tactical atomic weapons, ready to meet any sudden onslaught. It is their presence, in spite of the NATO numerical inferiority to the ground forces of the Soviet bloc, which provides, far more than any threat of suicidal massive retaliation, the deterrent to further Soviet expansion and the assurance to the Continental members of NATO that they will not be left in the lurch if Russian tanks are on the move. Even with the American and British components the defensive strength of Western Europe is at a dangerously low level; without them, there could be no effective defense at all, and Moscow would be in a position to dictate to all the Continental countries, even if Soviet forces had been pulled back out of East Germany and Poland. Khrushchev's boast that in such circumstances the Communist regime in Hungary would continue without a Russian army of occupation on the spot was well enough founded: not, of course, because the Hungarian people would have any more love for their Communist rulers than they had in October 1956, but because the Russians would be so obviously masters of the Continent and could intervene at any time without the possibility of interference by the West.

KHRUSHCHEV'S proposal was too obviously designed for Russia's advantage to have any attraction for the Western governments, but the idea of disengagement soon began to have a wide vogue in Western countries as a means of lessening international tension and reducing the danger of war, particularly after the successive announcements of Russia's intercontinental missile and earth satellites had prepared the ground psychologically for the advocacy of new policies. In Britain the greatest impetus for public discussion of disengagement was provided by Mr. George Kennan, who, as a visiting professor at Oxford, was invited to give a series of lectures over the BBC and reached an audience exceptionally large for the seriousness of his theme. His words had all the more effect because they synchronized with a stir in the Labor party produced by a plan for disengagement which was put forward in a speech at the end of October by Mr. Denis Healey, one of the party's specialists on foreign affairs.

The form of disengagement contemplated by Mr. Kennan corresponded to Khrushchev's proposal in that it required the withdrawal of the armed forces of the United States and Britain from the European continent, in return for a Russian withdrawal to the land frontier of the Soviet Union. It also required a prohibition of nuclear weapons, whether strategic or tactical, to the European countries thus evacuated. Instead of incorporating the tactical atomic weapon into the defense of Western Europe, Kennan urged resort to "the possibility of separating geographically the forces of the great nuclear powers, of excluding them as direct factors in the future development of political relationships on the continent, and of inducing the continental peoples by the same token to accept a higher level of responsibility for the defense of the continent than they have recently borne."

Mr. Kennan admitted that "in the event of a mutual withdrawal of forces the continental NATO countries would still require, in addition to the guarantees embodied in the NATO Pact, some sort of continuing local arrangements for their own defense." The premises of his argument, however, made it extremely difficult for him to explain how any system of security could be devised

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under his plan. While apparently assuming that the North Atlantic alliance would remain in being, with "guarantees" for its Continental European members, his whole conception of disengagement virtually ruled out any intervention by the United States or Britain in Europe in the event of a subsequent aggression there by the Soviet Union.

His main concern was that the great powers should avoid fighting one another, and that the United States and Britain should never use nuclear weapons unless directly attacked with them. The logical implication of his thinking, therefore, was that if the Soviet Union were to violate a disengagement pact by renewed military intervention in the affairs of other European countries, these countries must be left to their fate. But Kennan escaped from this conclusion by two lines of argument. In the first place, he played down the danger of Soviet military coercion in Europe, even if there were no formidable obstacles to it. In spite of the role of Soviet military occupation in the creation of the Communist regimes beyond the Iron Curtain and the ruthless use of military force to crush the Hungarian national rising only one year previously, Kennan informed his hearers that "we must get over this obsession that the Russians are yearning to attack and occupy Western Europe and that this is the principal danger." He did not deny that there was a Communist danger, but claimed that it was really one of internal subversion, and that "it is on the front of political realities, not on regular military battlefields, that the threat of Russian Communism must primarily be met." He was unable, however, entirely to disregard the possibility of a Russian invasion as a problem for the nations in question, and to provide against this he invoked a second line of argument, to the effect that a country could adequately defend itself with territorial militia forces which would "constitute the core of a civil resistance movement on any territory that might be overrun by the enemy." In spite of the lesson of Budapest, where the bravest resistance fighters could not prevail against Russian tanks and artillery, he thought the soldiers on whom their countries' independence must be staked "should not be burdened with heavy equipment." He maintained that any European nation which was prepared to offer guerilla resistance and could tell Moscow that "we are in a position to assure you that not a single Communist or other person likely to perform your political business will become available to you for this purpose" would have "little need for foreign garrisons to assure its immunity from Soviet attack."

Critics of Mr. Kennan's thesis did not fail to inquire how a democratic country with a domestic Communist party could possibly put itself into a position to deny a Soviet invader the services of the latter for the establishment of a "people's" administration after the conquest. The Communist parties of Western Europe may not be strong enough, even in France and Italy, to have any chance of capturing governmental power in peace-time, but they could operate as dangerous fifth columns in time of war, and in the event of a Soviet conquest they could provide—together with the inevitable Grotewohls and Fierlingers—the personnel for the new totalitarian order. If the independence and internal political liberties of Western European nations cannot be assured any regular military protection, and are to depend on almost unarmed civil resistance, there is no reason for supposing that such resistance would be more effective in West Germany, France, or Holland than it has been in East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, or Hungary. Kennan has expressed the hope that if the great powers were to remove their forces from the area between Brest-Litovsk and the Bay of Biscay, "the competition between two political philosophies" could be carried on there "in a manner disastrous neither to the respective peoples themselves nor to the cause of world peace." But this is to speak of Communism as if it were a doctrine competing with rivals for political power through constitutional means of free debate and free elections. If this were indeed the situation, it would mean

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that Communists had become good democrats, and there would not in fact be "two political philosophies" any more in the sense in which they exist today. But the basic aim of Communism—and what differentiates it from democratic socialism—is the purpose of taking and holding power by force and establishing the permanent dictatorship of the party. Violence remains, as it has been from the beginning, fundamental to the Leninist *Weltanschauung,* and it is vain to expect this violence to be confined within particular frontiers, except insofar as a balance of armed power renders their violation inexpedient.

It is quite true that the expansion of an ideology cannot be thwarted merely by troops under arms; there is a struggle for men's minds which cannot be decided by material power alone. But possession of the power of the state, with the ensuing monopoly of education, publicity, and propaganda, is the principal means by which a totalitarian faith extends its following; and the capture of state power, whether by internal revolution, by invasion and occupation from outside, or by a combination of both, is the decisive turning point in the process. At the present time, the total armed power of the Communist world is probably greater, and its purely ideological appeal less, than at any time since the death of Lenin. The danger for Western Europe is not that its democratic governments may be overthrown by purely internal Communist revolutions, but that Communist rulers may be installed by Soviet power in Bonn, Paris, and Rome, as they were once installed in Pankow, Warsaw, and Budapest.

The plan of disengagement put forward in his recent address by Mr. Healey differs radically from Professor Kennan's in that it realistically recognizes that Europe would be left virtually defenseless if all American and British forces were to be withdrawn from the Continent; it therefore provides for the retention of these forces in the extreme west of the Continent as part of the guarantee for the security of the proposed "neutral belt." The neutral belt, in his conception, would include the two Germanies, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary; France, Belgium, and Holland would be left as countries in which American and British units would still be stationed. This is a project which in its strategic implications is so far removed from Khrushchev's aim of getting America and Britain out of Europe that it seems very unlikely that he could ever be brought to consider it; and insofar as a proposal for disengagement, if it is not to be merely an academic exercise, must be such as to afford a possible basis for negotiation with Moscow, the Healey plan is not likely to get very far as a serious initiative in international politics. Since it has, nevertheless, some very attractive features and has been influential in spreading the idea of disengagement to a wide public, it is worthwhile to assume, for the sake of argument, that the Soviet government could be induced to accept a scheme of disengagement on the lines advanced by Mr. Healey. Let us then inquire what kind of situation is likely to develop in Central Europe after the disengagement has taken place.

HEALEY and other advocates of disengagement claim that it would not only reduce the danger of war by separating the armed forces of the great powers, but that it would also facilitate the self-liberation of the satellite countries. This expectation needs to be examined very closely. Healey argues that "if you could get the Red Army out of Eastern Europe and convince the people of Eastern Europe that it would not come back—this, of course, is equally important—then the East European countries would cease to be under direct Soviet control, although for various reasons most of them would still remain friendly to the Soviet Union and most of them would retain many of the political, economic and social characteristics of a Communist society." But would this be good enough from the Soviet point of view? Or, to put the question differently, can the Communist dictatorship of the Soviet Union afford to allow a Communist government to be re-

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moved in any East European country where it has been established?

Healey maintains that the Soviet Union would have no substantial interest in controlling Eastern European countries if they could get an agreement which insured the neutrality of the whole region. He argues that the satellites are not a source of military strength to the Soviet Union, but rather of danger, that they are unreliable as allies, and that, since they now have to be given economic aid instead of being mere tributaries of the Soviet Union, they are no longer economic assets. Hence, he infers, Moscow might be glad to get rid of them, if only the security of the Soviet Union could be otherwise assured. This view, however, disregards the importance of the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe for the stability of the regime in the Soviet Union itself. Basic to the ideology by which the party justifies its dictatorial rule is the notion that the predetermined historical trend of the age is towards Communism and that its ultimate victory is everywhere inevitable; the vested interest of capitalism may hold up its advance in various parts of the world, requiring periods of "peaceful coexistence," but it is unthinkable that any Communist regime should be overthrown by a popular upheaval in a country where it has once been firmly established. If such a thing were to happen, it would call in question the very foundations of Communist belief and would threaten Communist rule not only in other countries where Soviet power has imposed it but also in the Soviet Union itself. Yet that is just what would be likely to happen if the Eastern European peoples were to be convinced that they were secure against Soviet military intervention on behalf of their Communist governments. When it happened in Hungary in the autumn of 1956, the national rising was ruthlessly crushed by Soviet forces, and nobody doubts that in present circumstances any similar rising elsewhere would be crushed in the same way. But the idea of disengagement and the creation of a neutral belt in Europe implies that the Soviet Union must undertake not to interfere in the internal affairs of those countries which are now Communist-ruled, as well as of those which are now non-Communist. What guarantee then would Moscow have against a repetition of the events of 1956 and the emergence of political democracy in one or more of the ex-satellites?

Any agreement on disengagement between the Soviet Union and the Western powers would appear to involve one of two alternatives. The first is that the Soviet Union would seek and obtain from the West some kind of formal recognition of the legitimacy of the East European regimes over and above the ordinary recognition which is given to governments in diplomatic relations—an endorsement of the status quo which would make any anti-Communist revolution in these countries a defiance, not only of Moscow but of the new Concert of the Great Powers. This would be a moral betrayal by the West of the rights of the peoples of those countries—even though Western governments might be prepared to agree to it—in the style of Yalta and Potsdam for the sake of a settlement with Russia. The other alternative would be to avoid any precise definition of the status quo to be recognized in Europe and rely on a general guarantee of non-intervention in the neutral belt. But if there were an anti-Communist revolt, and if in spite of the guarantee the Soviet Union were to intervene against it, the Western governments would have to make up their minds what to do. The probability is that in such circumstances they would take none but diplomatic action and that the Soviet government would proceed on the assumption that it would not meet with any military interference.

It may be said that even if this were to happen, the situation would be at any rate no worse than it is now, since Russia would merely be preserving a Communist regime that already exists, and that it would be better in that after disengagment the conflict would be less likely to involve the great powers. But this does not apply to Ger-

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many, for any Soviet intervention in Germany would involve the country as a whole and would be likely to provoke a counter-intervention from the West, with a possibility of armed clashes much greater than exists at the present time, when each side has its own clearly defined territorial sphere. The question is whether there could be any durable disengagement without a satisfactory solution of the problem of the reunification of Germany. The present line of demarcation between the armed forces of the great powers is the former zonal boundary which now divides the territories controlled by the rival Bonn and Pankow governments. To remove the great power forces and leave the two German regimes face to face with each other in bitter enmity would certainly not be a way of promoting peace in the area, nor would it be likely even to achieve the aim of averting involvement of the great powers, for the latter could not be indifferent to the outcome of civil strife in Germany.

THE danger is so obvious that it must be assumed that any negotiations for disengagement would be made conditional on a solution of the problem of German unity. If disengagement were regarded as desirable, the allies might be willing to renounce their requirement that a unified Germany should be free to choose its international alignment; they would presumably be prepared to agree to a German withdrawal from NATO in return for a withdrawal of Poland and Czechoslovakia from the Warsaw Pact and the neutrality of all three countries. But could they go further and renounce their demand that the government and institutions of the new unified Germany should be left to the verdict of free elections? There is so far no sign that the Soviet Union is ready to abandon the Pankow regime and allow the German Communists to be reduced to the insignificance that free elections would inevitably inflict on them. The Soviet government denies that the reunification of Germany is a matter for decision between Moscow and the Western powers, and insists that it must be arranged between the Bonn and Pankow governments negotiating as two co-equal sovereign entities. The Communists appear to envisage a kind of federation in which the two parts of Germany would retain their existing political systems but would combine to form a federal government on a basis of parity. Dr. Adenauer has taken his stand on the view that it is better for German unification to be postponed indefinitely than to be achieved on such terms, and in the recent elections in West Germany the voters endorsed his leadership by a decisive majority. So far the Western governments have also supported his stand.

Voices are now, however, being heard urging a "compromise" on the question of democracy in Germany. But a compromise between a liberal and a totalitarian order within a single state would not be the kind of compromise in which the attainment of a practical *modus vivendi* might compensate for theoretical incoherence. A federal state combining the present West and East German regimes would be a political monstrosity and would make Germany far more dangerous to the peace of the world than it is now. Since any such arrangement agreed between the Soviet Union and the Western powers would be a frustration of the will of the German people, and could only be imposed on the Bonn government by very strong pressure, it would inevitably destroy the morale of the new-born German democracy and would make German politics a field for intrigue between internationally supported factions, with a *Putsch* as the only final means of decision (and foreign military intervention as a likely consequence). If disengagement in Europe is to be contemplated by Western statesmen, an unqualified acceptance by the Soviet Union of free elections for Germany—including the right of opposition parties to put up candidates in East Germany and international observation of the polling—should be made an essential preliminary condition. But since there is no probability that the Soviet leaders in their present mood will agree to abandon the East German regime, this

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means in effect giving up the idea of disengagement as a practical objective. The danger is, however, that if disengagement comes to be regarded by public opinion in Western countries as a panacea for the ills of Europe, there will be a disposition to pay whatever price seems necessary to achieve it, and the Western governments will be under pressure from their own peoples to yield in the blessed name of "compromise" on the German issue.

KHRUSHCHEV's recent tactics indicate that he is counting on his capacity to influence opinion in Western and neutral countries through a theatrical demagogic publicity in order to sweep the leaders of Western governments off their feet at a "summit" conference. His insistence on the summit meeting without a preliminary foreign ministers' conference is itself a part of this design, and he has already gained his point on this. He knows that in negotiations at ordinary diplomatic or foreign ministers' level he will be unable to get results without producing proposals to be examined in detail in all their aspects. But he believes that he can exploit the uninformed hopes and fears of the masses in democratic countries, their longing for peace and their appetite for large magniloquent generalities in place of vigorously defined undertakings. He evidently thinks that the popular pressures generated by persistent propaganda will be raised to their maximum with the super-publicity surrounding a summit conference, and that the Western leaders will not dare to go away from such a meeting with a failure to reach any agreement on the most important issues. He himself will not be under comparable pressure, for the Communist party of the Soviet Union has a total monopoly of all the means of home publicity to put the blame for any failure to reach agreement on to the shoulders of the wicked imperialists.

It is part of the price that the West has to pay for its political liberties that its leaders must be at a disadvantage in the kind of conference from which the Western peoples are led to expect far-reaching results. It is because they are aware of this, and because of the bitter memories of the disillusionment that followed the summit conference of 1955, that Western statesmen strive to avoid the circus diplomacy favored by Khrushchev and to keep negotiations with the Soviet Union in the undramatic channels of ordinary exchanges between foreign ministries. But the public demand for conspicuous efforts to reduce international tension has compelled them to agree to the Soviet proposals for a summit conference and to abandon their requirement that a foreign ministers' conference be held first to prepare the ground. A period of great strain now lies ahead of them, for Khrushchev is certainly aiming at an occasion which will be as great a diplomatic victory for him as Yalta was for Stalin.

The West will only be able to avoid political disaster in the coming months if its governments jointly develop policies of positive challenge to the Soviet Union, instead of merely reacting to the Soviet propaganda initiatives. It is to their interest to push the question of German reunification into the forefront of all discussion and keep it there. They must not allow themselves to be maneuvered into the position of continually making niggling objections to grand projects for peace and security put out from Moscow. They should concentrate on their own demands for the freeing of Germany and make it clear that, as far as they are concerned, the only alternative to that freedom is the maintenance of the defensive frontier of the West where it now stands.

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ISRAEL'S INTELLECTUALS

Young Writers and Middle-Aged Critics

MEIR MINDLIN

THE Israeli intelligentsia are so special and peculiar as to puzzle and disconcert anyone approaching them with preconceptions. A generally knowledgeable foreigner, expecting to find either the freely speculating mind he knows in the West, or—if he knows his Middle East—the impecunious journalist, professional man, or bureaucrat for whom nationalist fervor compensates for any lack of free speculation, will find neither of his expectations fulfilled. At first glance the Israeli intellectual seems wholly a man of the West, with his British weekly tucked under one arm and a highbrow American paperback under the other, his conversation sprinkled with the literary or artistic slogans of the day before yesterday. But scratch the surface and you find that you are dealing with someone *sui generis,* someone who identifies himself with the West but is not quite of it, though certainly no Oriental either.

The intellectual's age is very important, too, because of the decisive break between the generations in Israel. If he is over forty, his background is most likely to be East European and Diaspora-rooted. If he is under forty, he was born or raised in Israel, and is as different as sons can often be from fathers, though they have been molded by them. If you glance at the old-timer's library, you will find it made up of Hebrew books for the most part, with a few volumes in Russian or Polish to set them off. The Hebrew section will not only comprise belles-lettres but will also include the Talmud, Midrashim, and *Shulchan Aruch,* as well as quantities of Rabbinic and homiletic literature. When you converse at length with him you may get an odd feeling of having stepped into the East European past, so saturated is his talk with references, reminiscences, and jokes centering on the world of his childhood and youth. His interest in foreign literature is likely to terminate with Tolstoy and the 19th century generally; if he is avant-garde, he may have the works of Alexander Blok. The 20th-century moderns are little more than names to him; Eliot means George Eliot, the author of *Daniel Deronda.*

The library of a young intellectual will have an entirely different bias. It will probably be predominantly English, perhaps as much as three-quarters, and the Hebrew volumes will be mostly modern Hebrew literature and available reprints (Israel is the land of the out-of-print book). He will most likely have several volumes of Albeck's new edition of the Mishnah, whose wealth of Hebrew vocabulary and idiom he has discovered there for the first time, and Schirman's recent edition (if he can afford it) of the medieval Spanish and Provençal Hebrew poets. The English section will be miscellaneous and odd at times, full of the better paperbacks and an occasional esoteric volume. When you talk to him you will be wondering if he has read them, and if he has, how they have gone down; for when you discuss some European or American writer it will not be entirely clear whether you are talking about the same man, whether he has grasped what seem to you to be the

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ISRAEL'S intellectual life, ten years after the founding of the State, is marked by a cleavage between the older and younger generations which is here discussed by an American-born writer and critic who since 1946 has made his home in Israel. MEIR MINDLIN is literary editor of the English-language Jerusalem *Post,* and has also published in Hebrew. His "Letter from Israel" appeared in the February 1957 issue of COMMENTARY.

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main points at issue. At certain times surprising lacunae in his knowledge will suddenly yawn like an abyss, though he will be hungry for any story or scrap of gossip you can tell him about his favorites. He likes to talk about the problems of his generation (the first person plural recurring in his speech) and lavishes praise on his contemporaries, but when you pin him down he will insist they are not to be judged by foreign standards; anyway they are all his friends. Among his own friends he is perhaps even more acid than is usual in small-scale intimate intellectual circles elsewhere.

I need hardly add that these two stereotypes apply only to the general run of intellectuals, and that there are widely read and learned scholars in both groups, but they are rare, as they are everywhere.

PERHAPS we could bring out some of the more general peculiarities of the Israeli intellectual scene by describing the circumstances of a recent literary award. The award was made by a publishing house which is the creature of one of the left-wing parties. Of the three judges, two happened to belong to a different political party and were serving in their respective capacities of professor of literature and literary critic, while the third was a staff member of the publishing house. The winner of the prize was a very gifted young poet with no party affiliations at all. When informed of his good luck he was asked to keep the news secret until the following week—otherwise there was likely to be a stream of party members approaching the publishing house to ask why the prize had not been given to party faithful X, who had just enshrined his memoirs of the pioneering third *aliyah* in an epic poem, or Y, who had been the foremost versifier of his kibbutz for the last thirty years. At the ceremony, held in the party's writers' club, the prize-winner's businessman father-in-law asked to see the prize check, and glancing at it, could hardly contain his laughter, for, as he had surmised, it was dated a whole month ahead.

Now the unusual features of this prize-giving were that there were two judges from another party, that the gifted recipient really merited recognition, and that he was unaffiliated to any party. The rest is typical.

This politicization of literature and the arts—above all of the communications media—is of course just another aspect of the more general situation whereby the country's institutions have been divided up into what could be described without too much exaggeration as feudal baronies, the parties dispensing patronage and controlling job distribution, housing projects, and many other concessions. (Education used to be divided up among the parties too, and the division still survives in the form of a secular and a religious school network, the latter in turn subdivided into a religious and a *very* religious trend, Mizrachi and Agudath Israel.) Perhaps this was the only way in which a heterogeneous nation consisting of immigrants with widely differing backgrounds and interests could be made viable; anyway it works. One of the results, however, is that all the newspapers are party organs,* as are most of the weeklies and monthlies. Most of the criticism, verse, and general discussion appears in the Friday supplements of the newspapers, which also reach the widest audience. The writers' clubs, which are the centers of discussion and verse readings, have been set up by the parties.

And yet this extreme politicization is not of the totalitarian sort; nor need there be a direct connection between the writer and his party's ideology, at least not in these enlightened days. Since patronage is dispensed by the parties, and they also control the communications media and three of the biggest publishing houses, the writer adjusts, being more or less committed—rather less as time goes on. Most writers do not feel terribly oppressed by this situation (a party publishing house can take risks and losses that no private publisher would stand)

**Ha-aretz* claims to be independent, and there is some truth in this, but it is not really non-party, and reflects liberal-conservative views; its owner-editor is a Progressive party member of the Knesset.

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and there is considerable latitude within the party organs. Indeed, that is just the point: so long as one does not question the party's basic *raison d'être,* the writer is left alone, i.e., so long as he does not perform what one may reasonably assume to be one of his basic functions in society. Not that voices of protest are not heard in the wilderness. Protest, especially against the desecration of pristine pioneering virtues and values, is one of the favorite forms of expression of the younger writers; the other side is usually doing the desecrating, but the protester's own party can come in for criticism too.

MUCH of the heart-searching and questioning among the younger generation is sincere, and their confusion genuine. It has been remarked that sabras (native-born Israelis) are an unsubtle race, well-adjusted and thick-skinned, and not caring much for complexities and ambiguities. This is indeed the mask they present to the world, but matters are not so simple within. The crucial thing to remember about the younger generation of Israeli intellectuals is that they were raised on a great myth (to use the term literally, with no pejorative intention): the Zionist dream, which, with its utopian socialist supercharge, set before Israeli youth an ideal image that formed it (directly, or in reaction against it) and which haunts it to this day, and can be detected behind every reference to the social aspect of a subject in fiction, verse, and general discussion. The extreme reaction to the Zionist dream appeared even before the 1948 War of Independence, in the form of the Canaanite movement. This handful of disgruntled, cynical rebels caricatured the Zionist myth by declaring themselves an indigenous, sun-blessed, Middle Eastern race ("Canaanites") and poured contempt and contumely on the Galut Jewishness and synagogue Judaism of their fathers; they even affected jawline beards, presumably reminiscent of antique representations of the original Canaanites. They have disappeared by now (leaving only a few disaffected lunatic fringers) as their members have been absorbed in the Establishment, and have left no literary remains worthy of mention. But the changing attitude to Zionism has had more general effects and can be illustrated by the connotations of the term itself, which has become synonymous with preaching and moral exhortation of any sort—a mother using ordinary moral persuasion to get her daughter to help with the washing up is most likely to be told to "stop preaching Zionism to me." These are probably the natural effects of trying to institutionalize an ideal, and then continuing to preach it in its original form; the disparity becomes evident even to children.

It sometimes takes a sharp eye to detect the after-effects of the mythic approach, but it is always there. Thus there is hardly a young Hebrew writer who, when he visits a kibbutz or a border settlement, does not have guilt feelings. He has been raised to feel that his place is in the front line, wherever that may be at any particular time, and his safe urban routine sits upon him as does a suit and necktie on an old kibbutznik turned cabinet minister.

It must also be remembered that the Israeli intellectual scene was long a primarily left-wing affair. Though it was imbued with a *Zionist* socialism, the characteristic limitations of the left-wing thinking of the 30's and 40's left their imprint. While we must distinguish between Mapai, which never really entertained serious illusions about the Soviet Union's Jewish policy and attitude to Zionism, and Mapam, which can still be called fellow-traveling, here as in other fields Israeli leftism has lagged behind developments abroad. Yet in a showdown, the Zionist part of Mapam's split personality is decisive, as was shown during the Sinai campaign. The Communists have no foothold on the intellectual scene, being generally regarded as traitorous. Only a few months ago, Moshe Shamir, a young Hebrew novelist who is affiliated with Mapam, made the great discovery (writing in the Mapam paper *Al Ha-mishmar*) that "it is foolish to differentiate between the 'Stalinists' and 'non-Stalinists' in the leadership of the

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Soviet Union. The root of the evil is not in Stalinism, but in Leninism, in the formulation of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat.'" Now this was a discovery that American radicals of Shamir's relatively light shade of pink made back in the late 30's and 40's.

The enduring pro-Soviet weakness of Mapam can only be described as intellectual dishonesty. It is in part explainable as the holding on to a straw of distinction from its rival left-wing party, Achdut Ha-avodah, which has become extremely critical of Soviet policy ever since the 1955 Russian-Egyptian arms deal. It also represents a certain reaction to Mapai orthodoxy. The pioneering organizations of the 20's and 30's (the Histadrut and its many affiliates, factories, marketing and contracting groups, sick fund and banks, etc.) have turned into an Establishment, and though this change has found expression in changed attitudes and endless quips, the ideological adjustment cannot be said to have taken place. In a sense there has been a suspension of ideology in favor of a more pragmatic approach, which sometimes falls into cynicism, but the old habit of mind dies hard, though it is going out gradually with the older generation. Kibbutz thinkers and writers are on the defensive, for the most part grappling with the contradictions between their ideology and the surrounding reality, and above all trying to adjust to the loss of their status as the elite of the nation. No longer feeling himself "needed," the thoughtful and articulate kibbutznik is likely to find himself involved with an outsider in a discussion of the basic economic viability of the kibbutz. Yet there is something redeeming in the objectivity of the remark I heard in this connection from a kibbutznik, who observed, in reference to Israel's own technical assistance program for certain underdeveloped countries, that, "well, if it [the kibbutz] doesn't work here, we can still export it to Africa and Asia!"

LEAVING the kibbutz ideologists aside, the economic status of the Israeli intellectual is similar to that of his counterparts in the West, only more so. The struggle for existence at the middle-class level is an exhausting one, for it is on the salaried middle-income group that the heaviest tax burden falls. While the middle-class Israeli understands that there is a heavy defense burden to be borne, and that immigrants must be absorbed, he often feels that he is discriminated against by an egalitarian, labor-oriented government. The first signs of disaffection became evident with the strike of the professionals two years ago*—it is the subsequent pre- and post-Sinai situation which has kept the lid on. Many, if not most, Israeli intellectuals hold down two jobs or more, or meet the month's financial pressure by taking on odd jobs of translation, editing, or hack writing. Almost all the painters and composers, and many of the writers, live by teaching or journalism, as they do elsewhere in the world, but a much smaller proportion is able to live on its work, since the market is so depressed. One of the best Israeli painters, Mordechai Ardon, heads the art division of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Nathan Alterman, the poet, has a unique solution—he writes a weekly column in doggerel on current events for *Davar*, and judging from his latest volume of verse, the first in fourteen years, it may be doing him no good.

Like his counterparts elsewhere, the Israeli intellectual is pressed for time, has too little leisure for relaxed study, thought, and contemplation—there is only one day of rest, it should be recalled. But time is always found for hours of chatter in the pleasant sidewalk cafés of Tel Aviv, at least for those who write and paint orally.

One aspect of Israeli intellectual life which presents a special difficulty is the state of criticism. While we often hear complaints about the monstrous growth and involution of criticism in the West (with people only reading books about books), Israel presents a sample of the other extreme: an almost total lack of first-rate criticism. There

*See "Can Israel Support Herself?" by Oded Remba, in the November 1956 COMMENTARY.

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can be little doubt that an excess of the commodity is far to be preferred to a dearth of it. However arbitrary, snob-, fad-, or fashion-ridden the criticism of a particular country may be at any time, one can usually find some sort of more or less objective standards of excellence, whether within the academic world or outside it. The almost total lack of such standards in published criticism has had the most unfortunate effects in Israel, reducing the exercise of the critical faculty to that intuitive understanding and mutual appreciation to be found everywhere among artists above a certain level. There is no systematic book reviewing, so that a work of importance, especially by a new writer, can go completely unnoticed; what passes for art criticism is best ignored. The missing qualities are of the elementary sort—discrimination, intelligence, and scholarship. A survey of the Friday supplements reveals a chaos of unsupported and unargued opinion in which any honest reader becomes bleary-eyed with despair. There is really something appalling in these acres and acres of print, the fiction best left unmentioned, and the critical essays whirling in a void of amorphous half-articulated quasi-ideas.

The *Ha-aretz* supplement used to be the best of them all, but in the last few years it has become a potpourri of literary gossip and snippets of music and art news, i.e. it has descended from three-quarter-brow fare to straight middlebrow "pinky limony birnies and their turkiss indienne mauves," as James Joyce puts it. Then there is *Lamerchav*, the organ of Achdut Ha-avodah, which is most generous to unknowns and thoroughly undiscriminating (meaning that some good writing steals in among a vast majority of rubbish) and in which can occasionally be discerned ceremonial bows in the direction of the Iron Curtain. *Davar*, the Histadrut organ, is actually Mapai-controlled, and a most dreadful bore. *Al Ha-mishmar*, the Mapam paper, is full of "progress," the "camp of socialism," and the "world of the revolution," with all the subsequent fascination attendant on the literary life distorted through that lens. (It was the Hashomer Hatzair publishing house, however, that put out the Hebrew translation of Dudintsev's *Not by Bread Alone*.) The rest are not worthy of mention. This includes the religious papers, which supply worthy homilies by even worthier rabbis and sages that no doubt contribute to their readers' sound slumber after the *shabbes cholent*.

WHAT is lacking is *authority* of any sort, not the kind that stems from a school or a position, but the authority that comes naturally from the recognition of a finer taste and discrimination, an expert handling and exposition of ideas. There is a critic with pretensions to a national reputation, Professor Baruch Kurzweill of the recently established religious Bar Ilan University. Possessed of a Menckenish irascibility with none of the Mencken wit, a gift for endless repetition in an execrable Hebrew style studded with barbarous foreignisms, as well as a talent for working to death the insights he does occasionally stumble upon, he pontificates at length in the pages of *Ha-aretz*. His reputation (for he has a large following) is probably due to the scarcity of first-rate work.

Sometimes people who really do know better contribute to the confusion. Thus there is a certain high priest of Hebrew literature about whom the following story is told: Walk down a certain street in a residential quarter of Jerusalem in the late afternoon and you are likely to come across a young man staggering away from a certain house. Though he looks drunk at first, a closer look reveals him to be one of the younger Hebrew poets, and if you happen to know him, you probably (out of sheer humanity, if not curiosity) go up to him and ask what the matter is. "Ah," he will say with an expression of celestial joy, "X just told me that I am the greatest Hebrew poet of the younger generation, what Hebrew poetry has been waiting for!" Now the interesting part of the story is this: you can walk down that street any afternoon, and the same thing happens, only the poet is

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different each time. And X's motives are neither satanic nor ironic; they arise from sheer kindness of heart.

While the reasons for the lack of criticism cannot be explored here at any length, I should like to suggest a tentative explanation: namely, the East European origin of the older generation. The non-Hebrew (i.e. Russian) cultural ambiance of that generation has been stagnant for the last forty years. Cut off from it, with only the faintest inkling of what has been going on in the West, the intellectual of the older generation has had to rely wholly on his Hebrew milieu. Now small countries seem to require stimulation from larger ones to prevent inbreeding, however great their intrinsic strength. If we add to this the fact that political influence often raises the time-serving party faithful to positions of power and authority, and that the younger men who have taken over editorial positions seem to have acquired, at school and in the university, only a superficial grasp of Western literatures and modern critical methods, then the level of comprehension and the errors of fact that one finds in almost every article on foreign writing become more readily explicable. Criticism of Hebrew writers displays fewer factual errors, but is almost as weak in method.

This sad state of affairs does not prevent some very encouraging developments, such as the overflow audiences which fill the literary clubs for discussions of writers' work, and the fact that verse sales can compete with those in much larger countries: recent volumes by Leah Goldberg and Nathan Alterman having sold more than five thousand copies soon after publication. One cannot escape the feeling that there is a large and eager young audience for good literature, just waiting to be given a lead and authoritative direction. On the other hand, one cannot ignore the time-gap in the Israeli intellectual's awareness of new streams of thought originating abroad. It may take as long as ten to twenty years for some new movement to really sink in. This could be a good thing if it meant that the Israeli intellectual were left in peace to work out his own problems, without being bothered by the latest fads, but it is distressing and even eerie at times to have a spent movement crop up some ten years after its time, e.g. when, every few months, the Friday supplements carry an article on 1947-style existentialism.

There is another most serious lacuna in the Israeli intellectual's equipment—the Freudian revolution has just passed him by; it is not even a subject of coterie chitchat and humor. Freudian concepts have simply made no impression on him, with the consequent loss of a whole dimension of consciousness.

Among painters, Bernard Buffet is now making his influence felt, though action painting and *tachisme* have their adepts. As for the composers, they are pretty much up to date, but the audience has remained quite backward, being to a great extent made up of the German immigration and its descendants, who are more or less frozen in pre-1933 musical attitudes. When, a few years ago, Igor Markevitch played Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps*, a sizable part of the audience walked out—comprehensible enough behavior at the 1913 première, but inexcusable forty years later. Thus the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra's programs stick stodgily to the same limited repertoire of classics, very rarely playing Stravinsky or Bartok, Schoenberg and Berg almost never, Webern never; Pierre Boulez is only a name. Local composers are in a better position since they have a good chance of being performed by the Kol Yisrael Radio Orchestra.

The three repertory theater companies, who play regularly to packed houses, are pretty much up to date, since they feed almost exclusively on foreign plays (and classics—Shakespeare is very popular). They do everything they can to encourage local playwrights, and are eager to snap up any playable Hebrew drama, but the very few produced have been written by novelists, or adapted from novels. Occasionally a contemporary social problem is treated on the

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stage, as in Yigal Mosensohn's *Throw Him to the Dogs*, soon to be produced by Habimah—the subject is reported to be about the character assassination methods of an illustrated weekly.

A word must be said about scholarship, which is in a class by itself. The work turned out by certain departments of the Hebrew University is generally judged to be of the highest quality, especially in the field of Jewish studies and archaeology (with such outstanding scholars as Gershom Scholem, I. F. Baer, and David Flusser), but also in general history (J. L. Talmon). However, the academic sphere is very much a world apart, though occasionally experts will write on their specialties in the Friday supplements. The student body is not the live, seething, alert, and peppery organism one frequently finds in Western universities, but rather a pedestrian, hard-working lot, bent on preparing for a government or teaching career. Israel's mental technicians—its engineers, doctors, lawyers, scientists, etc.—are no different in their outlook and methods from their counterparts elsewhere in the world, and though their salary differential from ordinary workers is among the lowest in the world (a hangover from egalitarian pioneering ideology) their position is in the ascendant as their value to the state is increasingly realized.

THE central cultural problem confronting this generation of Israelis, however, is one that the intellectuals will have to face and discuss, even if they cannot solve it. This is the great and decisive break in the Jewish tradition brought on by secularization, made all the more acute by the creation of Israel. The older generation of Israelis, who were educated in the East European Diaspora, may have revolted against that tradition, but at least they had a good idea of what it was. This could not be said of the under-forty generation, sent forth from home and school by elders and teachers relieved and freed of that tradition, i.e. the part stretching from the destruction of the Second Commonwealth to the Emancipation (the Biblical period being loved and known intimately by sabras). This was once put to me very succinctly by a Hebrew writer who said, "A generation ago every Jewish cobbler knew his 'Ein Ya'akov' [a collection of Talmudic material] but that's more than I can say of the younger Hebrew writers!" To put it as crudely as possible, how Jewish are Israelis to be, aside from their Bible, Hebrew, and statehood? What should and can be salvaged from the past? It was the wholesale dumping of so much of traditional Judaism in one generation that made the break so severe. Is Israel to become just another country on the periphery of Europe, like Turkey, say, modeled on European institutions and ideas in almost all respects, a secular parliamentary democracy on the Western plan? There is certainly nothing very frightening in this prospect, but there should probably be some discussion on the subject before the *fait* is entirely *accompli*.

Actually, there is a sort of shadow discussion going on at the moment on a rather low level. This follows an administrative order by the Ministry of Education instructing teachers in the school system to introduce as much "Jewish consciousness" into their lessons as possible. It would seem that some members of the older generation (perhaps sentimental about the tradition they abandoned, for they do not seem to have suddenly become believers) were taken aback at the younger generation's lack of knowledge of Jewish customs and observances, which becomes particularly evident when sabras abroad show themselves unfamiliar with synagogue ritual. Thus Jewish customs are to be taught by non-observant teachers to non-observant pupils, perhaps as a sort of anthropology. This is strongly reminiscent of the efforts made over the last generation or so to produce holidays and festivals synthetically, the ceremony being cooked up at a teachers' meeting in school, or by the cultural committee of a kibbutz or moshav —with rather deplorable results on the whole, save in rare cases such as the Omer festival of kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, which has turned out such a good show that it attracts

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hundreds of visitors every year on Passover.

The question of Jewish continuity has not been ignored by the two major Hebrew novelists of this generation, S. J. Agnon and Hayim Hazaz. For Agnon it is a recurrent theme in his (quite marvelous) later work. He is an observant Jew, but has a foot in each world, and seems to see himself as the last of a species: a man who, with the whole range and depth of Jewish tradition behind him, also has a most acute and anguished sense of the modern *condition humaine*. In a wonderful story called "Iddo and Inam" he sets the question allegorically, and conveying a most moving sense of despair, he has his somnambulist heroine, called G'mulah (= recompense = Redemption?), fall to her death from a roof, taking with her her lover and would-be rescuer. (Agnon has created a whole private mythology in these later works, with all sorts of Cabbalistic idiosyncrasies—names beginning only with the letters *ayin* or *gimel*, etc. His work could supply material for tomes of exegesis, and would feed a whole doctoral assembly line in the U.S.—Israeli laggards have produced only three or four volumes, the most notable being one by Professor Kurzweill). Agnon and Hazaz are unique, however, and the latest fashion among the younger novelists is to write historical novels which lack the narrative skill of their foreign commercial prototypes, but are written in vintage Mishnaic-Midrashic Hebrew (Agnon's forte).

As for the Orthodox religious sector, it has been most concerned with preserving its customs and prerogatives (restricting Israelis to religious marriage and divorce, banning pork, enforcing Sabbath observance, etc.) and has confronted people interested in religion with the black-and-white alternatives of strict Orthodoxy or secularism, with no middle road or compromise; though, as a matter of fact, in Israel as in the Diaspora, Jews have been making their compromises, discarding most of the ritual obligations, while holding on to certain customs ranging from *kashrut* to annual synagogue attendance on the High Holidays.

The monolithic and fundamentalist character of Orthodox thought in Israel remains impervious to dialogue and thoroughly inflexible, with a consequent natural loss of some of its most alert and energetic elements, if ever so gradually, to the secular camp. This defection finds a perfectly tangible expression in the size of the head covering, ranging from the black, clerical, wide-brimmed headgear of the extreme Orthodox, through the ordinary fedora worn on all occasions by the observant, to the tiny knit skullcap hanging precariously, by a hairpin, to the back of the religious youth's head—so that from the front he is indistinguishable from his secular companions, but in the movies, watching Marilyn Monroe, he has his distinctive communal badge, just as the laborite has his open-necked shirt and tielessness. In addition we have Professor Y. Leibowitz (a Hebrew University biochemist and polymath with doctorates in several fields), whose religious thought (so far as I understand it) involves a sort of Kierkegaardian leap of faith, with the *mitzvot* and Sabbath considered arbitrary but obligatory distinctions imposed on the chaos of the physical world; but he has no following to speak of.

If we can draw general conclusions about a society in a state of intense flux, at the very beginning of its crystallization, then the Israeli intellectual scene seems to exhibit a failure of leadership. The older generation, which has shown its mettle in political leadership and economic organization, used ideology to support its aims, which have been accomplished for the most part. This generation has little to offer, since it is still living on the intellectual capital of its Diaspora background and either regards present-day reality as a falling-off from its original moral values, or has become sunk in the relative security of running the machinery of statehood (whether in a kibbutz branch or a ministry).

The younger generation, born or raised in Israel, is torn between the Zionist vision on which it was brought up, and the present-day reality which no longer fits it. This

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younger generation has also been raised as a part of the Western world, but has not yet come into its inheritance, except in the natural sciences. Disinherited of its Judaism, it faces the responsibility of choosing a "usable past." It feels that it has taken part in a great historic enterprise (the creation of the state) but does not have the imaginative power—or more probably the perspective in time—to invent great myths about it. This is a transitional generation, with no firm foothold in the past, which balances on the slippery ground of the present, and lives on the edge of a portable abyss, but is not sufficiently in touch with things abroad to realize that one can make intellectual capital of it. It is amazingly naive and innocent, considering the tension, wars, and social upheavals it has lived through, but then it has had the conviction of fighting for a just cause, a faith made all the more intense by the knowledge that it was also a fight for existence. With the coming of statehood, all the problems of the modern world—from hypertrophied bureaucracy to nuclear science—have been heaped on to the already heavy load of Israel's own special problems. The young Israeli is aware that life in general, and 20th-century life in particular, are far more complex than his parents thought, but these stirrings of awareness have so far produced only confusion and gropings in the dark.

Meanwhile, the good individual artists are working out their problems, which involve the handling, comprehension, and transformation of Israeli reality, and their efforts will eventually serve as beaten paths for others. As Agnon approaches his seventieth year, his vision is more valuable than ever, and who knows what masterpieces are lying in the cabinet where he ripens his manuscripts for years? Hazaz is working on three books of major import; S. Yizhar's big novel on the War of Independence (the younger Israeli novelists' favorite subject), of which three chapters have appeared in periodicals, may fulfill its promise despite its streaming consciousness; and Yehudah Amichai, building on a solid lyrical achievement, has already made his first tentative forays into larger forms and more public symbolism ("Saul," "Samson," the as yet unpublished "Queen of Sheba"), and gives every sign of developing into a major poet. In painting, Ardon—who exhibits only abroad—is a figure of more than local significance, and his former pupil Ruth Bamberger has had an extraordinary florescence in middle life, while Yossel Bergner grimly stokes up *Angst*, and Louise Schatz exorcises it with her Japanese-trained brush in lovely, subtle water colors. In music, Mordechai Seter (whose name means secret and retiring) is just that, but the appreciation of the originality of his use of modified modality is growing, and the dark evocative power of his solo violin sonata, his two motets to settings from the psalms, the brilliance and inventiveness of his Sabbath Cantata, cannot be matched easily elsewhere by composers of his age (just turned forty).

Perhaps one has no right to ask for more at this stage. It is probably enough for others to build on—for the Israeli adolescent I like to conjure up in my imagination, sitting somewhere oblivious to the drone in his classroom, distracted by dreams of greatness.

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POLITICS AND THE PUERTO RICANS

Getting Out the Vote in Spanish Harlem

DAN WAKEFIELD

"Y los últimos serán los primeros. . . ." ("and the last shall be first")—From a campaign leaflet of Jose Lumen Roman, candidate for the New York City Council.

A HALF-DOZEN men wearing wide, straw-thatched sombreros walked through the rain of an autumn Thursday night on East 104th Street and turned inside the Union Settlement House. They entered the auditorium, paused for a moment, and looked from left to right. On the left-hand side ten people, all but two of them white, were scattered through the rows of folding chairs. Most of them sat alone. On the right-hand side about fifty people, several of them wearing the wide sombreros, were sitting together—some chattering among themselves in Spanish, others waiting with folded hands and a silent, skeptical detachment. The half-dozen men who had just come in walked quickly to the right and looked for seats. They did not take off their sombreros, which bore inscriptions painted in red across the crown—*Vota Jose Lumen Roman*. Their eyes were fixed on the men who moved against the brown velvet backdrop curtain on the stage. These were the sponsors and principal speakers of the evening's program, which for the first time in anyone's memory brought together the candidates for City Council from East Harlem to discuss the issues of the coming campaign.

DAN WAKEFIELD, a new contributor to these pages, lived in Harlem for six months in preparation for writing his book *In Spanish Harlem* (to be published by Houghton Mifflin), in which our present article will appear as a chapter. Mr. Wakefield was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1932, and was graduated from Columbia University.

This in itself was enough to make the meeting a notable event for the neighborhood. Its consequences were further enlarged by the fact that one of the candidates present—the man whose name appeared on the crowns of the sombreros—was aspiring to become the first Puerto Rican in history to win a seat on the New York City Council. Puerto Ricans have lived in New York since the early 1800's, and by the 1957 season of Roman's campaign the Puerto Rican population totaled more than half a million, which made New York the largest city of Puerto Ricans in the world, not excepting San Juan on the island itself. Yet no Puerto Rican had ever gained one of the twenty-five seats on the New York City Council or, for that matter, any elective city office.

It was mainly Puerto Ricans who came to the meeting at the settlement house, and many of them spoke only Spanish. But all the audience sat attentively as speakers in English told them about the importance of political action. The word came first from a local minister called in to act as an "impartial" master of ceremonies, and next from the New York Hotel Trades Council, an organization whose union membership of hotel and restaurant workers is composed of a growing number of Puerto Ricans, and whose local committee sponsored the evening's unusual meeting. (The attention paid to Puerto Rican affairs by the hotel and restaurant workers would probably have come as no surprise to the city at large, since a mass television audience had been informed that spring on the Ed Murrow show by a manager of one of the city's largest hotels that mainly Puerto Ricans were employed in his kitchens. He explained that they made excellent workers because they came from

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a tropical climate and therefore found it easy to work in the steam and heat of the kitchens.)

It turned out that not only religion and organized labor were represented on the stage, but the Republican party as well. There is nearly always a minister at East Harlem gatherings, and the unions are showing up more and more often, but Republicans hardly ever venture into that part of the 22nd Senatorial District north of 96th Street. But there on the stage, big as life and swathed in the blackest flannel, was Richard C. Welden, the young lawyer chosen as the year's Republican sacrifice in the 22nd.

Welden took the floor first because he had to get on to another appointment. The audience almost automatically began to grow restless as he presented his brief, which dealt with the topic he judged this gathering to be most interested in—the bill, since adopted, to ban discrimination in New York City private housing. Welden was against discrimination: "I think all candidates for political office in New York City are against discrimination." The joy of being residents of such an enlightened capital seemed to be lost on the crowd, but Welden forged on undaunted, droning out readings of various anti-discrimination laws as an agent on the right-hand side of the room got up to pass out additional sombreros painted with *Vota Jose Lumen Roman.*

The audience no doubt knew, without paying the close attention that the text required, that Welden after all had his reservations about integration. He recommended holding off the anti-bias housing bill in favor of "voluntary integration," which really was the best and most amiable course. "That is my position," he said in conclusion. "I hope you understand it is not ambiguous."

It really was not, and there was no applause. Several perfunctory questions came from the audience, amidst much shuffling, when suddenly there arose a man from the right-hand side of the room with black hair, a black mustache, a large black umbrella, and rimless glasses that matched his severe expression. Although unknown to Welden, this was William Rodriguez Carrasquillo, campaign manager of Jose Lumen Roman, and he demanded to know if anyone on the left-hand side of the room spoke Spanish. The two Negroes and eight white people scattered through that section looked up expressionless, without a single "Sí," and Rodriguez asked the chair if this very meeting was not the moment to begin integration. There was hearty applause as Willie Rodriguez hoisted his great umbrella and moved to the other side. A heavy Italian man in a gray sweater and rumpled brown overcoat in turn heaved up from his lonely seat on the left and walked over to join the Puerto Ricans on the right, accompanied by another burst of applause. In the midst of all this, Richard Welden, sensing that he had lost the initiative, picked up his briefcase, nodded farewell to the unmindful audience, and disappeared quietly into the night.

THE voluntary integration and disappearance of Welden seemed to have a happy effect on the audience, and when Jose Lumen Roman, candidate of the Liberal party, came to the front of the stage, the atmosphere had lost much of its strain. He stood at one side of the stage, an almost tiny man with a serious face supporting large, black-rimmed glasses, and said in English that he had offered to act as an interpreter at this meeting for Welden and John J. Merli, the Democratic candidate, since he knew that many of the people present spoke only Spanish and the other two candidates did not.

"But who," said Roman, "will be present day in and day out in the City Council to interpret the needs of the Puerto Rican citizens if these men are elected?"

The audience cheered, and Roman told them that "the issue in this campaign is Puerto Rican representation. There are over 500,000 Puerto Ricans in New York and not one is on the City Council."

Roman warmed up to his subject, bring-

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ing his arms down in quick, public-speaking-gesture jerks of emphasis, recounting the sad conditions in which the Puerto Ricans were forced to live, in tenements where "roaches are as large as mice and rats are as big as cats." The audience who lived in the tenements laughed and clapped at the exaggeration of size, if not of fact. Things are never so bad but what they couldn't be bigger.

As for his opponent, the incumbent Councilman John J. Merli, Roman charged that this representative of the people was always absent when it came to important votes. "His oldest trick is to disappear." John Merli sat expressionless on the stage as the audience laughed at the allusion to the name their councilman is known by among the Puerto Ricans of his district: the "Invisible Man."

"I call," said Roman, "for a sign in the City Council that says for the first time in New York City's history: *Aquí se habla español.*"

The campaign sombreros were waved in the air and Roman smiled at the cheers. A tall, aged man with deep lines running through his dark brown face got up at the back of the room and asked in Spanish if the questions had to be asked in English. The crowd on the right cried *"Español!"* A translator was brought out, and by the curious protocol that had been decided on, stood by to translate the questions asked him in Roman's native tongue into English for Jose Lumen Roman.

A pretty young woman in a blue silk dress arose and addressed the stage in Spanish. The translator told Roman that the lady's question was: Why did the Americans hate the Puerto Ricans? She did not understand why it should be, or why it was that landlords and Italians had such a special dislike for Puerto Ricans.

Jose Roman was graceful enough not to refer the question to John Merli, the political leader of East Harlem's Italians and the champion of its landlords.

"Only low, uneducated people hate the Puerto Ricans," Roman answered. "True Americans don't dislike the Puerto Ricans."

This news was translated into Spanish, whereupon a man got up and asked then if this meant that newspapermen were not true Americans.

Roman did the best he could with these ideological questions, and wound up with more clearcut assurances on practical matters, such as a promise of protection to building superintendents, who often were tossed out by landlords with only a few days' notice, without explanation or compensation. The economic "issues" had begun to take shape: as a candidate of the Puerto Ricans, the city's newest minority group, Roman was pledged to protect the superintendents. As a candidate of the Italians, who have now been residents long enough to realize fully the American dream, Merli was pledged to protect the landlords.

ROMAN, having assured his followers that he would safeguard their particular interests, turned the floor over to the landlords' freedom fighter. Councilman Merli was of course psychologically handicapped by the fact that he was standing in the camp of the enemy. His followers had long ago stopped attending political affairs at this "mass" level in East Harlem, for they long ago captured it and owned it, politically and economically. The best guess as to the reason for Merli's appearance at this event was his professional curiosity about what the new, never yet seriously insurgent Puerto Ricans were up to. They cannot yet be taken too seriously in this, their oldest neighborhood in the city, for they are far from owning it: they only live in it.

John J. Merli, the "Invisible Man" made flesh, stepped to the front of the stage—a large, blue-suited man with glasses and thinning gray hair and a voice as husky as his body, which seemed uncomfortably strapped in its meeting-night clothes. He told the audience, with injured pride, that he was after all no outsider: "I have spoken in this hall many times. Over fifty-three years ago I was born three blocks away

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from here. I still live in the room where I was born." Besides these qualifications of residency, Merli reminded the crowd that, "I come from a minority group *too*. My father came from Italy—steerage."

Merli went on to declaim about the numbers of the bills he had sponsored in the City Council; and, taking note of the nature of most of them, paused to point a finger at the audience and say: "I'm proud of the fight I've waged for the small businessman. You in this room are mostly laborers now, but in five, ten, fifteen years, God willing—you'll be able to buy a small business yourself."

John Merli, almost breathless now, rested his case with the promise of democratic capitalism, and opened the floor for questions.

Willie Rodriguez, bearing his black umbrella like a lance, popped up and asked if Mr. Merli realized how tremendous was the influx of Puerto Ricans into East Harlem, and into all of New York. Merli admitted to this knowledge, and Willie pressed on to ask whether or not these people shouldn't have a representative on the City Council. Merli judged that this was a loaded question, and felt that he had to answer yes—if they felt a Puerto Rican would represent them better than himself, they of course should elect one. The Councilman drew his first and only cheer of the evening.

A young man in a leather jacket got up and asked Mr. Merli if he believed in working six days a week and then going to church and resting on the seventh. Mr. Merli said he found no fault with that program, and followed it himself. Well, then, the young man wanted to know—"You think it's right I have to work 60-70 hours a week myself?"

Mr. Merli looked startled, and informed the young man that the 60-hour week had long been legislated off the books.

"But what am I going to do about it?" the young man asked.

Mr. Merli said he should by all means take it to the proper authorities. The audience laughed; they had been there before. The people's representative had held up to them the hope of buying a small business, but the people were hoping for a six-day week.

A lady got up to say that the Puerto Ricans needed help, and Mr. Merli said his political club was open every Monday and Thursday night, eight o'clock on. The lady asked if Mr. Merli spoke Spanish and he admitted his vocabulary was limited to several phrases remembered from high school. The question of whether the lady or her friends could get much help from Merli's club will remain hypothetical because the lady and her friends will not go there.

THE questions ended and the audience filed back out to 104th Street—the more dedicated partisans of Jose Lumen Roman having at least the advantage of the campaign sombreros which served an unexpected practical purpose in keeping the rain off the heads of the wearers. The wide sombreros that served as a symbol of Roman's battle are first of all the symbol of the Puerto Rican worker of the hills, the *jibaro*—symbol of the poverty the people of the island thought they were leaving behind and found in a different form in New York City. They appealed, as did Roman's entire campaign and platform, to their feeling of "national" unity and indignation, and in that sense became a symbol also of the campaign's bitter, predestined finale.

The campaign of Jose Roman to win a seat on the New York City Council was launched with a speech by the Mayoress of San Juan, and closed with a speech by one of Roman's workers calling for the formation of a "Spanish party" in local politics. In all the bright oratory of opening night at Roman's headquarters on 106th and Lexington, a representative of the Liberal party apologized for not being able to address the audience in Spanish as the Puerto Rican speakers were doing, but observed that, "after all, we are all Americans."

The observation was legally accurate—

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all Puerto Ricans, whether on the island or the U. S. mainland, were made U. S. citizens in 1917—but as the campaign progressed it became increasingly obvious that the legal truth was in reality a political lie. On the weekend before the election, campaign manager Willie Rodriguez dolefully stared at the map on the wall of the 22nd Senatorial District in New York City and reviewed the battle. There is one member on the City Council from each of the twenty-five senatorial districts in the city; the 22nd, where Roman waged his campaign, runs roughly from East 74th Street as far north as East 135th Street, from the East River to Park Avenue, with a bulge in the middle that extends as far west as Eighth Avenue. In the center of the area is one of the oldest and largest Puerto Rican communities in the city (known as "Spanish Harlem") running roughly from 96th Street to 116th Street, from Fifth Avenue to the East River, and there are Puerto Ricans scattered throughout all the district north of 96th Street. South of 96th Street is the old German community of Yorkville, with a very small number of Negro and Puerto Rican inhabitants. North of 116th Street and East of Lexington Avenue is one of the old Italian sections of the city, and Italians are still scattered through what was once a part of their section to the south of 116th, which is now largely Puerto Rican. There are Negroes living throughout all the district north of 96th Street, though in nothing like the dominant numbers of the nearly all-Negro section of Harlem proper, from Lenox Avenue westward, which falls inside a different senatorial district.

Willie Rodriguez, examining the map of this great "melting pot" of the nation, explained that his people had mainly conducted their campaign in the "Spanish" part of it.

"What we wanted to do," he said, "was get speakers to go into the other sections—German speakers in the German section, Italian in the Italian, and over here, this is a rich district, have an American speaker go. The trouble is, we lack the speakers. We go in ourselves, they can tell the accent right away—it's no good. We did get one Italian girl to help us though—very nice girl. She was out last night giving speeches *in* Italian."

In the meantime, candidate Roman, having covered the "Spanish" section of the district, was speaking to a Puerto Rican Merchants Association on 14th Street, and preparing to give a pre-election weekend address to a Puerto Rican group in the Bronx. They of course could not cast a single vote for him, but contributed their full moral support.

THIS concept of sectional campaigning was not originated by Jose Lumen Roman—it is an old East Harlem inheritance. The only politician who brought the minority groups of the area together for any political purpose was Vito Marcantonio—though his technique was hardly a violation of the tradition. Marcantonio merely learned all the languages of all the large minority groups in his district—Italian, English, Yiddish (there was then a large Russian Jewish community in East Harlem), and Spanish.

Marcantonio, who caused another unusual political union when the Republican, Democrat, and Liberal parties finally joined in coalition to oust him from his seat as East Harlem's U. S. Representative in 1950 after he had established a firm reputation as a follower of the Communist party line in Congress, was, and still is, a legend in his old neighborhood. The five-thousand mourners who attended his funeral in 1954 were made up of people who spoke all the languages he did, and several more. Once, during the campaign of Jose Roman, a group on a street corner in the heart of East Harlem's Puerto Rican district stopped several people and asked them who was the politician who had done the most for the Puerto Ricans. The answers were either Marcantonio or no one. One man reached in his billfold and pulled out a lifetime membership card in the Vito Marcantonio club. Nearly every oldtime resident has a story—often improved by the passage of

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time—of how the great "Marc" saved him from a landlord, or personally came to his apartment to turn on the steam, or examined a damaged stair and demanded its repair. His popularity prompted dire prophecies and speculations in the outside world—outside of East Harlem—that the Puerto Ricans had "gone Communist." But the people of Marcantonio's tenement domain neither knew nor cared what battles he fought in Congress. Who in East Harlem has ever seen "Congress"? The battle the Puerto Ricans knew and faced was the battle with the landlord, and "Marc" seemed to be their champion in it.

Marcantonio got his political start in the old LaGuardia club, and so did the Puerto Ricans—though in different ways and for different reasons. Fiorello LaGuardia first spotted the talents of Marcantonio when he led a successful tenants' strike at the age of twenty. Four years later, while he still was a student at New York University Law School, he managed LaGuardia's successful campaign for a seat in Congress as representative from East Harlem. That was in 1924, and it was not until the early depression days of the 30's that the Puerto Ricans began coming into the LaGuardia club. They had taken no formal part in New York City politics before that, and came on the scene through their own necessity and the local politicians' growing awareness of their potential voting strength in the area. One of the early Puerto Rican members of the LaGuardia club recalls that many of the Puerto Ricans first got involved "because of the depression."

"You had to go to your Congressman to find out how to get help. Well, they gave you the help and then wanted you to help them back with your vote and political support. That's how it started."

Puerto Rican participation was developed further by Marcantonio, who did not depend alone on his knowledge of Spanish to draw their support, but chose as his top lieutenant and "Spanish secretary" a bright young man from Arecibo, Puerto Rico, named Manuel Medina. Marcantonio had a special "secretary" at his club from each of the district's minority groups so that constituents of any shade of color or dialect could speak about their problems with a brother when they came to the club for help. At election time, Marcantonio would send these "secretaries" to campaign for him among their own particular minority; the dream of Willie Rodriguez in 1957 had already been realized twenty years before by Marcantonio, who had the right language speaker for every section.

Marcantonio's Puerto Rican secretary, Manuel Medina, was a fiery speaker as well as an able administrator, and achieved a considerable reputation of his own in Spanish Harlem. He ran twice for office himself, in 1949 for state assembly, losing to the Negro Hulan Jack (who went on to become Borough President of Manhattan) by only 671 votes, and in 1950 made an impressive showing in the City Council race by polling 27,853 votes, and thereby coming far closer than anyone since then to upsetting John J. Merli. Merli got 35,377 votes, which is about the usual total the Democratic candidate counts on in that district. In explaining his unexpected showing in the City Council race, Medina made clear that he broke none of the neighborhood traditions in campaigning—he spoke only to the Puerto Ricans. As for the Italians, "Marc took care of that." But after Marcantonio was beaten by the coalition that same year, and died of a heart attack in August of 1954, after starting to talk again of a comeback, there has been no one to "take care of the Italians" —or even talk to them—in behalf of a Puerto Rican candidate. Marcantonio's organization died with him, and Manuel Medina, one of Spanish Harlem's best-known political figures, became a notary public on 100th and Madison.

IT IS true that no non-Puerto Rican politician in New York except Marcantonio captured the Puerto Ricans' support and sentiment, and it is also true that no politician except Marcantonio ever really tried. The history of the city's politicians in their

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relations with the Puerto Ricans has been a history of flimsy "favors" of the most perfunctory kind. The "recognition" by the major political parties and their candidates of the Puerto Ricans in New York City has varied only in its degree of crudeness, and has always been limited to a minimum of real help and a maximum of "brotherhood" oratory.

The first recorded recognition of the Puerto Ricans by a major party's political candidate occurred when Senator Robert Wagner, Sr., had lunch with a group of the leaders of the city's Puerto Rican community in 1932. The historic occasion was officially photographed and printed in the Spanish press of the city. Lunch was not to be scoffed at—it was more than the Puerto Ricans had received from any other politician.

The few scattered Puerto Rican political recognitions and victories since then have come through last-minute efforts of a party or candidate to play for the "Spanish vote." When the election was over, the people who cast the "Spanish vote" were again forgotten. The most flagrant use of this technique has been on the mayoralty level, where the candidates before election decide they must show their deep sensitivity to the problems of the Puerto Ricans. A handy and painless device for this was invented by Mayor William O'Dwyer six weeks before the 1949 elections for mayor in New York City—it is called "The Mayor's Committee on Puerto Rican affairs." It passes manifestoes. It is referred to in the campaigns as evidence of the Mayor's vital interest in the Spanish-speaking peoples of the city who, potentially, make up the fourth largest voting group, behind the Italians, Irish, and Jews. The "Mayor's Committee on Puerto Rican affairs," after proving its use as a harmless propaganda group, was solemnly adopted and incorporated by Mayor Vincent Impelliteri and then Mayor Robert Wagner, Jr. Recently, however, Wagner watered it down even further by incorporating it into the "Committee on Inter-Group Relations." It holds conferences and passes manifestoes. And it contains one Puerto Rican member.

In 1951 Mayor Vincent Impelliteri moved beyond the shadow play of his Committee on Puerto Rican Affairs to make a historic political appointment. He named Emilio Nunez to the post of Special Sessions Justice, proudly proclaiming that this was the first Puerto Rican appointed to serve on the Municipal Court of New York. As it turned out, Emilio Nunez did not happen to be a Puerto Rican. He had a Spanish name, of course—and, indeed, he was from Spain. In such ways the faceless minority confounds the politicians with the always surprising, always bothersome business of having some personal identity.

THAT was the last "Puerto Rican" political appointment until 1957. It was then that Mayor Wagner announced, for the second time in New York City history, the first appointment of a Puerto Rican to the post of municipal magistrate. The mayor made sure that his designee, Manuel Gomez, not only spoke Spanish but also came from Puerto Rico. Manuel Gomez was the real thing, and history was finally made.

The Puerto Ricans have fared only slightly better in getting into elective office. Two of them made the New York State Assembly, and the first, surprisingly enough, was elected in the earliest days of Puerto Rican political participation. In 1937 the Republican party was looking for a way to upset the Democrats in the old 17th (now the 14th) Assembly District in Spanish Harlem. It was composed of about half Negroes and half Puerto Ricans, and the Republicans hit on the novel notion of running a Puerto Rican. Oscar Garcia-Rivera was the man, and he won. The next year at Albany he voted for the kind of legislation that would benefit his tenement constituents most, and this did not happen to be the kind of legislation being pushed by the Republican party. Garcia-Rivera was accused by the Republican club of his district of "hanging around too much with Communists and members of the American Labor party," and on these grounds was refused support

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for re-election and kicked out of the club. He turned to Marcantonio, and won a second term as a candidate for the American Labor party before retiring from elective politics.

No Puerto Rican in Manhattan has since been elected to any office; the Democratic party has never put up a Puerto Rican candidate in Manhattan. In 1953 Ed Flynn, boss of the Bronx Democratic club, needed a candidate for State Assembly and decided to make an appeal for the first time to the second oldest Puerto Rican community of the city, the Morrisania and Mott Haven section of the Bronx. A Puerto Rican named Felipe Torres was supported for State Assembly by Flynn's club in 1953. He won, and still holds his seat.

The Democratic party in Manhattan, party of the people, the masses, and the minorities, has managed to avoid ever running a Puerto Rican for any elective office. The Puerto Ricans who have run in their oldest neighborhood, in East Harlem, have run on the tickets of the Republicans, the Liberals, and, before it died, the American Labor party. This is not necessarily a sign of the forward-looking nature of the aforementioned parties, but in most cases a tactic mixed of despair and hope by out-of-office political groups to score an upset over the older, entrenched minorities represented by the ruling Democrats.

The first Democratic acknowledgment of Puerto Ricans in Spanish Harlem occurred in 1954 as a result of the fact that the Jewish district leader of the 14th A. D. had refused to support Robert Wagner, the Tammany Hall candidate for mayor, the previous year. The great majority of the Jewish community had long moved out of East Harlem—including Sammy Kantor, the Democratic district leader. But Kantor was entrenched, and might be to this day were it not for the fact that he threw in his political cards with Vincent Impelliteri and thus aroused the wrath of DeSapio and Tammany Hall.

DeSapio "discovered" that Kantor did not actually live in his district any more and had him disqualified. The fact that the leader did not live in his district was nothing strange. It is the common practice of political leaders of the slum areas who make good as representatives of their old neighborhood to realize the dream of its residents and move to a better place.

Having ousted Kantor, DeSapio decided to recognize the people who were still unfortunate enough to live in the district, and appointed a Puerto Rican. He called before his throne a representative selection of Puerto Ricans and placed his hand on the shoulder of one named Antonio Mendez, a mild-mannered, hard-working gentleman who had a jewelry store in Spanish Harlem, no political past, and no recognizable ambitions of a political future beyond the one assigned him by DeSapio. The other candidates for the appointment included men who had worked as block captains in Sammy Kantor's club and had expressed certain hopes of some day running for an office. These more wild-eyed men were passed by. Tony Mendez thus became the first Puerto Rican district leader in New York City and a new blow was struck for democracy. DeSapio further noted the bravery of his selection, since it was made at a time when much adverse publicity was devoted to the Puerto Ricans because of the shooting up of Congress by a group of Puerto Rican Nationalists. In appointing Mendez, he stated: "The Democratic party believes now, as it always did, that guilt by association is as tyrannic, as evil, and as ugly as Communism. The Democratic party believes that the Puerto Rican people will provide leadership to our nation and add to our great heritage as a free people."

Thus having assured New York that Tony Mendez would lead no gunmen on City Hall, DeSapio seated him into the district leadership. He has done an earnest job, and been faithful to the Chief through a growing number of bolts and threats to the status quo from within and without the club. The first official challenge to Tony's leadership occurred in the fall of 1957,

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when one of his top captains—a man who had hoped for the district leadership himself—opened a short-lived revolt. Benie Caballero announced his candidacy for the leadership of the 14th A.D. East with a pink and blue leaflet charging that "Agitators, Pinkos, Nationalists, and Non-Residents Have Taken over the Democratic Leadership of the 14th A. D. (East.)" When questioned as to how poor Tony could be both a Pinko and a Nationalist, Benie said that a more basic issue was one stated in the leaflet (spelling in the original): "We firmely believe that Tony Mendez, being illiterate and inixperienced in political matters, cannot lead the Puerto Rican people residents of this district effectively."

Benie elaborated on this by explaining in a low voice of outrage that Tony was very uneducated and Americans would think all Puerto Ricans were uneducated if Tony was the Puerto Rican district leader. "I'll tell you the truth," Benie said to his questioning visitors, "when Tony goes to see Carmine, he doesn't call him 'Chief'—he calls him 'Chef.'"

But Benie never got the chance to put his platform to the test. The Chief had his men look into the revolt, and Benie's petitions to run were disqualified in court on the ground that they were not properly taken. Benie disappeared from the scene in disgrace and was last reported to be living in Greenwich Village, which may mean something to the eventual literary history of the Puerto Ricans, if not the political.

A much greater menace to the status quo of Tony's Caribe Club came shortly after when the Liberal party announced that it was running a Puerto Rican for the City Council in East Harlem. Tony's Puerto Rican Democratic club of course had to support the Italian Tammany incumbent, John J. Merli. The Liberal candidate was Jose Lumen Roman, a thirty-two-year-old reporter for *El Diario de Nueva York* and announcer of a Spanish-language TV version of "Mr. Anthony" called "What Is Your Problem?" Roman was the first reporter to write on the exploitation of Puerto Ricans in unions in New York, and later testified on the matter before the Senate committee investigating rackets. His stature as a hero among his people was in question, however, because many Puerto Ricans objected to his TV program, feeling that it exploited and advertised the problems of the Puerto Ricans and lowered their status and reputation as a group. Problems common to all humanity were paraded before the microphone, and many Puerto Rican watchers felt the presentation implied that these were all "Puerto Rican problems." They especially objected to the fact that the problems of Puerto Ricans were presented for all to see, and then an advertisement for a roach-killer would appear on the screen. All this has its bitter effects when presented to a group made sensitive to their public image by the daily experience of being a "Spic" in a city of strangers.

But whatever the adverse feeling caused by Roman's TV show, he had much more tangible handicaps to contend with: he was previously not known personally in the neighborhood, and the Liberal party had no organization in the area to work for him. Nevertheless, he posed a solid and dangerous challenge to Tony Mendez, who would stand or fall on how well he was able to hold the Puerto Ricans in the Democratic camp against a Puerto Rican candidate. The motto of the Tony Mendez club was: "I am a Democrat first and a Puerto Rican second," and it was up to Tony to prove that his people followed the rule.

His club was bolted again by a group of old timers, some of whom had once aspired to his office, who said that they could not stay loyal now against a Puerto Rican candidate. They set up a rival club called the "Loyal Democrats" and reversed the motto of Tony's club, saying, "I am a Puerto Rican first, and a Democrat second."

THIS heresy was naturally looked upon with horror by Tammany Hall, and in election week a group of regular Democratic candidates for city office spoke at a rally at Tony's club, pounding home again the poli-

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tics of acquiescence and obedience that constitutes their political message to the Puerto Ricans. The essence of this politics is that everyone will be given his handout and it is unpatriotic to step out of line. The Italians are ahead of you, but they were there first. This Democratic ideal was summed up most cogently by one of Tammany's lawyers for the club, a man named Irwin Grey. He told the assembled Puerto Rican multitudes who crowded the club and stood drinking the beer and eating the bread that is the bounty of Tammany Hall for its people in election week rallies: "We must show that we will follow our leader to elect all Democrats running for office."

He explained that doing this—turning out a large vote in that mainly Puerto Rican district—would endear the people to the Democratic leadership: "And then, when we come here for little favors during the year, we will be strong and Tony will be able to ask the Mayor for many little favors for the Puerto Rican people."

The Democratic party stands in the midst of the nation's worst slum and assures the people who live in its roach-ridden rooms, which go for three times the price of a room south of 96th Street, that if they will turn out in force to vote for the Democratic party they will be rewarded with little favors. Return us to power, says Irwin Grey, and we will serve you more beer and hot dogs when election time comes round again, and your children out there who are put in "health classes" in the local grade schools because they suffer from malnutrition so badly they can't do their school work, they can come too, and partake of the hot dogs that Tammany dispenses as a favor.

Neither DeSapio nor Mayor Robert Wagner appeared at the Democratic rally in Spanish Harlem. It was left to local candidates and third-string party hacks to deliver the high promise of a handout.

The Tony Mendez club did its job and proved its devotion to the cause beyond a doubt when it kicked out Frank Rodriguez, one of its workers who was caught on election day showing a Puerto Rican who asked how to vote for Jose Lumen Roman how it was done. Political education has its limits.

A meager 5,452 people pulled the C-line lever for Roman on election day, which is only slightly more than the usual total that any Liberal party candidate expects in the 22nd Senatorial District. The Republican candidate, Richard Welden, got 10,460, which is the usual total a Republican runs up in the 22nd, largely through strong support in the "American" and "German" part of the district south of 96th street. John Merli got 32,022, which was 3,000 less than when he was first elected in 1950, but still quite close to the expected total that the Democrats count on in the area. The status quo was maintained to near perfection and Tony Mendez enforced his position as the "House Puerto Rican" of Tammany Hall.

THE results of the vote were almost identical with the party showings in the district in 1950—except for the glaring absence of the 27,853 votes that Manuel Medina had gotten on the American Labor party line. Where did those 27,853 votes go? They were certainly largely Puerto Rican. Medina himself feels that, for one thing, most of the Puerto Ricans who were registered by Marcantonio's organization merely gave up when he died; and that those who remained active went with the Democratic party for lack of any alternative, and also because of the year-round work of Mendez and his club later on to line up the Puerto Ricans for the Democrats. If Roman were to bring out the old and new Puerto Rican vote, it would take time and money and men—none of which he had in any significant measure. He opened his headquarters two months before the election; two years would have hardly been enough. The registration of Puerto Ricans has always been difficult because of the English literacy tests, which many are unable to take or are embarrassed to try—especially in Spanish Harlem, which has an older age level than many of the newer Puerto Rican settlements, and is sufficient enough unto itself so that people who live there (especially women, who don't

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have to go outside the area to look for jobs) are able to stay put all their life without learning a single word of English. Many do just that. The Council of Spanish Organizations in New York City estimated in 1957 that there were 85,000 Puerto Ricans registered to vote in the city of New York—and a potential total of 266,000 voters. The relatively small number who vote is not due to any "national" or "cultural" lack of interest in voting by Puerto Ricans, since elections in Puerto Rico usually draw 80 per cent of the voters. The difference can be attributed, in some significant part, to the English-language literacy test requirement.

It is obvious that in any case the voting pattern in their oldest neighborhood, the 22nd Senatorial District, was exactly the same in 1957 as it was in 1950 (except for the absence of the American Labor party vote.) And yet there has been a tremendous new influx of residents since then, especially of Puerto Ricans, into the once highly concentrated Italian area east of Lexington Avenue, between 96th and 116th Streets. But that is largely the domain of John Merli's Democratic assembly district club, and it is against the continued survival of John Merli to go out and try to register the new Puerto Rican residents. There is no other organization to do it.

On election night there was a total of two Puerto Ricans and one Negro among all the people celebrating in John Merli's political club on East 105th Street. There were also some cops, who had come to free-load on the roast beef sandwiches and beer of victory.

There were no cops that night at the headquarters of Jose Lumen Roman. The only people besides the Puerto Ricans were volunteers from an International Union of Electrical Workers local which has a growing Puerto Rican membership and whose leaders were interested in working for the election of a Puerto Rican to the City Council. These outsiders worked every night for the last two weeks of the election, and were known among Roman's regulars as the only steady non-Spanish speaking workers of the campaign. On election night at Roman's headquarters, one of the Puerto Rican captains turned to a stranger and asked him, "Are you Spanish?" The stranger said no and the Puerto Rican nodded understandingly, extended his hand, and said "Sholem Aleichem."

There was no roast beef and no beer at Roman's, and the few remaining workers stood around a desk at the back of the empty hall in the late evening amid the scattered refuse of defeat—the useless maps and the left-over leaflets with the promise that *"los últimos serán los primeros,"* the last shall be first. The men passed around a pint of whiskey that someone had brought and talked in the bitterness of those who are always last. They talked of what was the mystery to them of their failure, blaming it finally on the Liberal party, which they felt had not really cared, and pledging to form a Spanish party, because they decided they could only trust themselves. Someone asked if this wouldn't restrict their appeal to others, and a man explained that it would be a "Spanish party open to all Americans." Campaign manager Willie Rodriguez stood with his face pale and slightly whiskered by the long day, a notebook poking through a hole in his white shirt pocket, and asked if he himself had failed, and the others assured him he had done his best. It was not his fault—it was the others, those forces no one could quite pin down but which were against the Puerto Ricans; those invisible forces of bitterness and disregard which had again returned the Invisible Man to the City Council by an overwhelming vote, and the men around the desk stood beaten by them and not understanding them. Willie Rodriguez said there would be a meeting in that very room next Sunday to form the Spanish party. He stood for a moment in silence, then picked up the pint of whiskey, raised it in front of him, and proposed a toast.

"To the future," said Willie Rodriguez.

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THE COUNTRY OF THE CRAZY HORSE

A Story

WALLACE MARKFIELD

AS THE train began the long crawl under the tunnel to Brooklyn I thought again of the crazy horse. It was Saturday morning, and all the mothers sat before the stoop on bridge chairs, opening tangerines and helping themselves from a big bag of polly seeds, budging not one inch as the super shot his dirty looks about and warned of summonses for each and every one who blocked his path to the cellar. The movie-house was not yet open; my crew and I waited, waited for the moment to draw near, killing the time with marvelous death-falls—the slow, coin-flipping sag of George Raft; the sharp flinch and spin of the settler as the arrow strikes; the stool pigeon's slow crumple as they cut him down in the phone booth, behind the billboard, atop the church steps.

When all of a sudden the horse came clopping down the street. Heavy and handsome he was, the kind Buck Jones and Hoot Gibson sat, looking smart enough to pull you out of quicksand or loosen your bonds with his teeth, and white as a centaur. He bucked and wove through the traffic, taking little hip-hops up and down the sidewalk, kicking at the hedges that lined the one- and two-family houses. The cluster of mothers broke and scattered, then joined together again to form a circle around us like a wagon train. One, wilder even than the rest, made a run for her boy's two-wheeler, crying, for no good reason, "What did he need it for? What, tell me, what?" From an open window someone sloshed a pail of water. We began throwing pebbles and bottle caps and flipping little cardboard squares with our rubber band guns, but they fell short. The laundryman turned the corner in his truck and let go on the horn. Seymour, my best friend, who could imitate anything, brought up from deep within his chest the spang of bullets on rocks and trumpeting of wild bull elephants spotting the white hunter. Somehow stung by this, the horse whinnied back. He lowered his head, took delicate little steps to the sidewalk and stopped before the house of Ringleman, the dentist. He reared up, he flared his nostrils and showed his terrible teeth. Then, in a movement that seemed as precise and formal as a dance step, he made a long, low leap. And impaled himself upon the iron fence.

They removed the carcass later, on an open truck, and washed down Ringleman's lawn with a hose. My mother dragged me upstairs, bore me into the bedroom and caught fiercely at the neckband of my shirt. Her face trembled, and she opened and closed her mouth as if there lay in her mind some fearful pronouncement no tongue could utter. I saw the horse heave and rear between us again, his eyes glittering like the future. I stand, awaiting my mother's explanation for all that has passed. But there is only her hand, heavy as brass upon my face, and the cry, "Look at him. Feel him. How perspired he is, how it drips from him!"

Two stops now from my station and I am drenched with sweat again. I move to another seat, fleeing the fan's powerful draft, conscious of how vulnerable I am, of my tendency to colds and swollen glands, of the way I load my stomach with rich and spicy foods. From across the aisle a woman jumps up and, marvelously balancing

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against the pitching and bucketing, looms over me. She is plump and moon-faced and there is a tenderness in her eyes, as though she would like to stroke me as I sit there. A swift half-turn, a languid shrug, and she allows herself to fall heavily upon the seat next to mine, with a smile that stretches from one end of the world to the other. Her hands begin to flutter nervously, and I move closer to the window, pretending to lose myself in the boring vista of playgrounds and cemeteries and television antennae that spear the last light like crucifixes. She is stooped over, working very hard and furtively at something; once, she lifts her head to smile again, as though there was a secret between us. I watch her like a grim eavesdropper, awaiting the fulfillment of events. She strains, she wriggles, she falls back, spent. Then, gathering all her forces for one compulsive effort, she reaches deep into the straw cushion and draws out a maimed magazine.

"I used to love to read," she says at last, blinking her mad, moist brown eyes.

I nod profoundly and slowly spread my arms, the gesture of one who sees no escape from his miserable existence.

"But now, who has the mind for it? And every day to the hospital, that can knock anybody out. Not that the traveling bothers me. It's the going up and down to change trains. But it's the very least I can do for him. My brother-in-law. Oh, I knew already, even before the operation, when he complained that he can't eat any more, that he lost his appetite. Because that was an eater! Yeah, yeah! I knew already when they finished, I looked at the doctor's face. I didn't have to ask. They opened him up, they took a look, and they sewed him up again. And you know what he got it from? From one thing only. Aggravation."

"Oh yes, oh yes," I chant liturgically. "I can imagine, I can believe it. Aggravation. . . ." Till the age of fourteen I had been certain it was a Yiddish word.

"Since he's sick I don't give a damn for anything. I walk out of the house without even—you should pardon the expression—a girdle on. Though before I complain I should first bite my tongue off. A person has his health, he has everything."

"That's it. To be healthy is the main thing," I echo. Then, thank God, I recognize my station, like the beginning of an old movie, and I hustle for the door.

"Goodbye, good luck," she howls after me. "In whatever you undertake. You're a very, very nice person."

I FEEL a tickle of nervous excitement as I enter the streets. There's a brand-new community center where my old lot was and a hive of garden apartments whose brick is colored the sickly pink of a rabbit's eye. I stare inside the picture windows, into each living room with its Van Gogh sunflowers, its kidney-shaped coffee tables, its gigantic mohair chairs with their cold unrumpled covers. For a moment the acres of cement under my feet seem to turn into wall-to-wall carpeting, and I have a sudden impulse to shout something wild and crazy—*"God is Love!"* or *"Sauve qui peut!"* But I content myself with the idea as Flatbush sprawls vast and arctic and baffling before me, holding only the etherized silence of a museum. Not a gurgle anywhere, not a cheep, not even the yap of a backyard dog. I fondle the reassuring bulk of the candy box under my arm, dreaming of myself as a good son, an accountant, a chiropodist, a professional certainly, one who phones his mother each day from the office, even before his wife. At that moment I hear a cry that sounds as though it rose from a throat clogged by blood and rage. I stand, dumbfounded, till I catch the one terrible word, the speaking of the unspeakable: "Ma!" A yowl, a lunatic roar and then, with rising fervor, "Ma, open the window, Ma!"

I move along, tense and poised as a tightrope walker. Every corner, every garage, every alleyway and clothesline is an announcement of old sins. Here I broke, here I tore, here I mocked, here I raged, here I stole. . . . I near the candy store where I'd once applied my criminal mind to loose cigarettes and comic books, fighting it out

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with old man Teller over the water-bag I'd hurled into his fountain. "Oh, you killed him," his wife announced when the stroke came to finish him, "you ate him up alive, you and yours." Yet business was business, and she went on selling me my cockemamies, my skate keys and pencil boxes, and when she had to, sent me out to pick up a few pennies calling people down to the phone.

A POWERFUL longing for an egg-cream assails me; I assure myself that it will wash down the nauseous sense of homelessness. With the chilly, menacing air of a movie gunfighter I walk past the little group of shmoozers clumped around the magazine racks and plant my elbows on the fountain. I give my order to the runty owner, making foolish conversation as he works the syrup dispenser. "It's a very strange thing," I say, "but I notice that you just cannot get a decent egg-cream in Manhattan. Why is that? After all, chocolate is chocolate, milk is milk, and seltzer is seltzer."

He puts the drink before me and whispers dramatically, "It's all the syrup. What I use, I have to pay forty cents more on the gallon."

I let out a cunning, portentous "Ah!" Then I drain the glass in two long swigs and finish up with a big fig newton. The mixture turns bitter in my mouth. I wonder if, somehow, I have not been taking in the body and blood of old man Teller.

He wipes his hands on a soiled apron. "A malted," he moans. "They don't know how to make it and they don't want to know. You got to freeze the milk. Otherwise, tastes like *pishachs.*"

"Yes, oh yes, now I see." I nod my head as though I'd just heard the seven proofs for the existence of God. "No wonder! You freeze the milk. Yes!"

I put down a quarter and he flicks the change at me. Swiveling around fiercely, he lets out a bellow at a young wise-guy who blocks the doorway and makes too free with the comic books. "Moron," he yells, in rage and despair, "the whole store should burn with you in it!" He coughs and coughs, choking on a cold lump of grief.

"Kids," I soothe, as I stalk to the door. "Kids."

"Sure," he says, wiping and wiping at the marble counter. "But he's old enough to die."

I quicken my steps for the last two dark blocks, palms perspiring, whistling tonelessly through clenched teeth, like a man getting ready for his bride. Even from the corner I can make out my mother's face; it seems to have the eerie luminosity of one of Chagall's angels. I keep to the shadow, but she spots me anyway, hanging out the window to make the neighborhood ring with her "Sonny!" The nitwit yell shakes me up, as it did in the old days, when it would sour my life on the streets, following me wherever I went to catch me *in flagrante delicto*—with a stolen deposit bottle in my hand or a snotty word on my lips. Methodically, I check myself for failings: Am I wearing a hat against the changing weather? Do I strain my eyes on too many movies? Paying fancy prices at the all-night delicatessens? Ignoring overdue notices from the library? And roughage? Does my system get enough roughage? All clear, and I enter the lobby, where the super has long since given up his mop-work against the track of dogs and baby buggies.

"Welcome, stranger," my mother says. "I'm glad you still remember how to get here."

She moves in for the kiss, lowering her head and placing both hands on my shoulders. I block her deftly with the candy box. She averts her eyes, as though it was a telegram announcing disaster.

"No?" I threaten, making a mock grab. "Then here and now it goes out and down, down, into the incinerator."

"Take it home," she pleads. "Do me a favor and take it home." Her enlarged and plaintive eyes fix on the walls behind me, where my honor cards and graduation pictures hang. "He has a few cents and he must spend them. That's him. Even when he was a child."

"Don't you worry." I laugh a big boom-

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ing Edward Arnold laugh, indicating I can afford this and much more.

"Sidney!" she summons. "Come! He's here!"

And my father drifts in, bearing the magazine section from last Sunday's *Times*. All his life he's never been able to catch up with the papers. His face is overcast with bafflement and a vague horror; at any moment he seems to expect the raising of my hand against him. Ten weeks ago he got himself a coronary, and he keeps rubbing his left side and nodding at me, as if to say, "Now you're a wise-guy, but wait, only wait a while." He leans over, plucking at my sleeve. "That suit," he snorts in derision. "Where did you pick up the bargain?"

My mother winks and bites her lip. "What's the matter?" she asks, a little shrilly. "It's a nice suit. Honest to God, I think it's very, very nice on him."

"Fine," my father grunts. "You bought it. You like it. Wear it in good health."

"In the *best* of health," my mother murmurs, looking passionately into my eyes. "Now come. You'll go inside, you'll have a bite. I have pot cheese. I have sour cream. I can slice in some vegetables."

So it's been, as long as I remember. You can die before you'll get a piece of meat in my mother's house. Still, for all her Gandhi ways my mother keeps alive a marvelous image of herself as a hotsy-totsy cooker, a wonder-woman with stuffed derma and sweetbreads and Old Country soups.

I mumble something to the effect that I have eaten, that I put away a big meal uptown, a costly meal.

Bitterly, tenderly, she says, "You come visit your mother and you eat on the outside."

"Ah, come on, Ma. Ma, come on." I hang my head and scrape my feet like a movie adolescent.

"I shopped. I prepared. I made a special trip."

"Don't force it." My father turns both palms up in his man-of-peace gesture. "You did your duty. You did the right thing."

"You'll take some home with you."

"I'll take."

"I'll wrap a nice little bundle and you'll enjoy it later."

"I'll enjoy."

We move out of the foyer, my mother pulling ahead and steering a desperate course for the kitchen. "Wait, Ma, wait," I tell her. "Why don't we go and sit in the living room? Come, we'll sit in the living room."

"Hah!" my mother cries in terror and disbelief. She back-tracks fast to cut off the living room door. "It's an icebox in there. I had to shut off the steam, it was turning all the drapes yellow. So help me God."

"Oh no, you don't!" I link arms, imprisoning her frail and fearful flesh and lead her tenderly into the living room's cluttered bleakness. We have not sat together here since the druggist came to claim I'd laid hands on his crazy daughter.

I didn't remember so many flowers. Lilies mostly, though here and there a few fat roses. Wherever I look there is the image of a flower. On the draperies, on the seat covers, on the lamp shades. Imbedded in plaster wreaths on the wall. Spilling all over my mother's apron and housedress. I begin to get a headache and breathing comes harder, as though they're draining oxygen from the air.

Then we get down to business. My father opens with a "What's new?"

To which I make reply, "What should be new?"

This stumps them. They expect more from me, their prophet and augur, their Hamlet and Tamburlaine. From the end table my Bar Mitzvah picture smirks at me. Hey, hey, he calls, this back-talker, this crafty fatso, where's that family chronicle you began at twelve? The ball of tin foil you were saving? And the instruction book in Judo? Gone now, with the old NRA Blue Eagle, with Dickie Moore, with hard-faced Frankie Darro and Garfield in his blackened T-shirt.

My father unfolds his magazine section; he has decided to readmit the present. My

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mother, in desperation, talks of aunts and uncles and cousins long forgotten. She permits nothing to rest in peace, she treads upon every grave in the family plot. This one owes her money, that one brought no gift to my father as he lay in his hospital bed. They have used her, they have sucked her and drained her, they have turned her heart into a huge festering sore. It's almost beautiful to watch the way she boils and blazes, a regular Old Testament queen, fire-eyed and calling down curses. She plays the clown too, getting her satire across with deviling malice, fingers pulling and probing as though they were molding effigies. And I begin to see how much I've taken from her. I catch a gesture I used at a party, a gibe I delivered the week before, a whine that enters my voice in cafeteria debates. I feel like an anthology of old sorrows.

Spent, consumed, a clawed hand punishing her breast, my mother says, "Strangers. Sometimes they treat you better than your own."

My father warms to the theme. "She's telling me something new. Strangers. When I was in the hospital they couldn't do enough for me. I'm not exaggerating. The nurse once saw that I couldn't digest the milk they were giving out. She made a special trip to get me a little tea when the kitchen was closed. And they would all talk to me. Do you know that when I left, the social worker came over and shook my hand and gave me a kiss? She told me, 'We're all crazy about you, we love you, but we don't want to see you again, you hear. That's an order.'" He laughs, aroused and deeply pleased. "Which reminds me. Tomorrow, without fail I want to give Mostag a ring. He was the one in the next bed who let me use his electric shaver. That's a prince, a real prince. To look at him, would you believe he's worth close to a quarter of a million?"

"'To look at him'? What do you mean 'to look at him'?" my mother mimics. "When you would sleep I used to sit and talk to him for an hour at a time and he'd have a big, big steamer basket by the bed with fruits and nuts and candy and he wouldn't once say, 'Here, take a piece.' Did you ever notice, the more they have—"

"Come on, get away!" Violently, my father shakes his paper. "I assure you, if you had helped yourself he would not have begrudged it to you. Men don't think of those things, it's not in their make-up."

"You don't let a person sit like a dummy. I didn't need his piece of candy. Thank God, I can afford to go out and buy a box. But be a sport, at least make the gesture."

"You know a lot! As far as I'm concerned and from the way he acted to me, why he's as decent as they come. Money or no money, you'll find goddamn few people who'll run around when you can't wait for the nurse and empty your you-know-what for you; goddamn few!"

My father's eyes are shining, burning with all his energies, and a queer look comes over his face. It's the look of a small boy shaking hands with a cop or a cowboy star, the look he'd get when he spoke of Debs and Norman Thomas, then F.D.R. and the manager of his local. In an instant he can shed his self, ecstatic with mediocrity. He becomes the one who sits in the back, always in the back of group photographs, the one who holds the umbrella over the principal speaker at a street rally or springs from the heart of a crowd to joggle the assassin's gun. . . . Years ago he broke down and wept scalding tears at the dinner table. And when we begged and pleaded for the reason he ground his teeth and quivered and answered, "You didn't see. You didn't read. Westbrook Pegler. What he had the gall to say about the Roosevelt boys!"

MY MOTHER rises. She's spotted the imprint of a finger on a window pane and she chases after it, relentless as Old Dutch cleanser. Then, swaying gently from her heels to her toes, she utters a great wrenching groan. "Tell me," she says, "do you remember Mr. Wasserman?"

I indicate my uncertainty with a limp disparaging hand.

"Ah, you should certainly recall," my

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mother says, a shallow sweetness invading her tones. "He lived near the Parkway, he used to be here day and night. The one who made your suit for the graduation. Everybody talked about it, they couldn't get over his workmanship."

"A mechanic," my father announces. "A pair of golden hands."

"Last week he called me. I couldn't get off the phone. I had to pretend the bell rang, and excuse myself."

Any moment now I know the shaft will come.

"So—" She draws and holds a long breath and her face pales and swells. "Two days ago. A hemorrhage. Go imagine."

"Never, never," my father cries, taking over. "In a million years, never. He wasn't a man, he was a giant. In the old days, when everybody was stretched out from the heat he'd be working the presser. And then first, late, late at night, he'd run around to pick up, to deliver. Yes, yes, oh yes, he was going to be president of the Society, he had big plans, he was going to build and renovate."

MY FATHER hunches forward. His words become thick and hazy, his fingers spread and whiten by their grip on his paper. He works and works to bring his awful feelings forth, but it's no go. Then names come scuttling through his mind. One by one he reels them off, a whole Book of the Dead. Kornfeld and Baumgarten . . . Ellinger and Glick . . . Horwitz and Kaplan . . . Old Man Fine, who chased a daughter out of the house for wearing a sleeveless dress . . . Rosen, scarred long ago by gangster acid . . . they've gone out now, the men my father loved, each and every one of them, who had never been before and would never be again, like brilliant stars at the end of night. And what people they were, what snap, what class and quality they had! Who's to keep the Society's books now, send out post cards for unveilings, throw the first clods of earth, and trim the cluttering weeds from grave beds? Nah! Their children were no children, keeping nothing up, paying no dues, coming to meetings only to eat and make stupid jokes.

"You know," my father says thoughtfully, "they'll send a check for five hundred dollars when I die. Thank God, it won't cost you a penny."

"Poo-poo!" My mother spits with a dry mouth against evil eyes and menaces.

"You think he'll bother to say *Yizkor* once in a while?"

"He'll say, he'll say," my mother assures.

A cold wave of penance moves through the room. I feel suddenly like promising all kinds of things: long visits, phone calls to relations, a greater interest in the fortunes of the family, a donation to the Synagogue. My father leans back against the chair. How bad he looks, I realize, how narrow and gray his face, how thin his hair and flabby his jaws, how cruelly shaven his cheeks.

"It's time, it's time," I announce, like a nervous innkeeper.

They rise with me, my father laying aside his paper finally, my mother commenting on the shortness of my stay, promising fantastic dishes, a veritable love-feast for my return. At the door my father describes a new way of returning to the city, and forces me to wait while he writes down the trains and stations, pointing out that I can save myself an extra fare.

"It's the 'D' train," he bellows, as I flee into the hall. "Make sure!"

"I'll make sure," I promise, waving and clutching the directions like a passport.

I've barely made the corner when I seem to hear my name called and the rush of heavy feet. What, I wonder, is it my old crazy horse again, clopping out of the past? Again, the calling of my name, and my mother catches up, proffering a soiled shopping bag.

"The pot cheese and cream. And a few cans of sardines. I made a nice package."

"Ma, Ma," I say. "For God's sake, Ma."

"What does it hurt? You'll enjoy."

"I'll enjoy." I give her a furry kiss and walk away, faster and faster, the shopping bag bulging against my side like an obscene growth.

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A CRITIQUE OF THE NEW JEWISH THEOLOGY

From a Secularist Viewpoint

JUDD L. TELLER

THE widespread, although perhaps not too deeply entrenched, anti-secularism in vogue in America today is not only promoted by such things as Billy Graham's revivalism and the TV performances of Bishop Sheen; it is also vigorously fanned by a number of former Marxists turned religious. One obvious explanation for the duplication of this anti-secularism inside the American Jewish community is the tendency, noted long ago, for the Jewish world to reproduce inside itself developments in the general world. Another is that the disillusionment produced by the events of the past several decades has hit the Jew, with his early faith in the Enlightenment's promise of full equality, harder perhaps than other liberals and radicals.

The American Jews who have progressed from Marxism to Judaism in recent years may be divided into two general categories. There are the "vulgar" but not necessarily anti-secularist *ba-alei t'shuvah* (returners), the Samuel Ornitzes and Michael Blankforts who produced lachrymose fictional atonements for having broken with parental piety in their youth. And then there are those penitents who required a complete refurbishing of their psyches and a new "system" to replace the one that collapsed. These latter are the "wrathful" prophets, anti-secularists to the hilt. Their mentor on the way to *t'shuvah* and Judaism has been, perhaps to his own surprise, a Christian theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, the chief exponent of American Christian existentialism.

But Dr. Niebuhr has influenced more Jews than just those who were once Marxists. The rabbis seem the most addicted. Today nearly all American rabbinical periodicals in English manifest some kind of preoccupation with Niebuhr. *Judaism,* a quarterly largely devoted to Jewish religious writing, published an essay last year by Rabbi Levi A. Olan of Texas that forcefully opposed to Niebuhr's position the traditional Hebraic one. The next issue carried an equally vigorous defense of Niebuhr by one of *Judaism's* contributing editors, Emil A. Fackenheim, who proclaimed that "Niebuhr's interpretation of the Hebraic view of history, whatever its shortcomings, is vastly superior to that of his critic."

Centuries ago Jewish religious thinkers debated, modified, and absorbed Greek philosophy. But these same thinkers always avoided encounters with Christianity—not only out of prudence but also because they did not deem theology itself worthy of polemic. Maimonides, when coerced into debate by the Church, restricted himself to challenging the contention that the Messiah had come and to refuting in general terms Christianity's claim to be a continuation of Hebraic tradition. That a Christian theologian should become an operative influence in Jewish religious writing is an unprecedented development. And that some of those disillusioned with Marxism should find solace in a Judaism refracted through the prism of a Christian theologian is of special significance.

JEWISH religious thinking has been no exception in feeling the impact of modern existentialism—a fact to which COMMENTARY'S own pages bear witness. Here JUDD L. TELLER, a regular contributor, enters a strong dissent, both as a secularist and a Jew, from what he calls the "new American theology," best represented, he believes, in the writings of Will Herberg, also well known to our readers. Mr. Teller writes prolifically on all aspects of Jewish life and culture and is also a lecturer. He is the author of *Scapegoat of Revolution* and *The Kremlin, the Jews, and the Middle East.*

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I believe myself typical of a great many Jewish secularists in my attitude to the new American Jewish theology. Its appreciable reliance on a version of Christian theology offends the strong emotional commitment I still retain to Jewish religious history. Its anti-liberal and anti-secular attitudes seem to me to be as menacing to my secular freedoms as they are inconsistent with the essence of what I have been taught to regard as Judaism. Let me explain.

MY GRANDFATHERS on both sides were Talmudists by endowment and by training, and Hasidim by family conditioning. These qualities were not always compatible. They rarely journeyed to the Hasidic rebbe, and then only when their wives nagged them about soliciting a blessing for a sickly infant or some such matter. But when they did, they chose their rebbe with discrimination, always for his learning, never for his reputation as a *ba-al ness* (miracle worker). My father, who came to America in his twenties, recalled to the end of his days his several visits as a youth to the "old Tchortkover" rebbe whose days had been spent "in Torah." Torah, to my father, was Talmud first. Maimonides was a name uttered in awe: "From Moses to Moses there had arisen no one like Moses." The *Mishneh Torah* was more often on his table than on the shelves, and for discourse with his "perplexed" son he would produce the *Moreh N'vuchim*. There was no question I dared not pose to him, however heretical its intent.

My father's household was conducted in strict accord with the *Shulchan Aruch*. If I gradually discarded most of the observances it enjoined, it was because they had worn out their relevance for me personally as a Jew, not because I had come to regard them as the mad maiden aunt in the attic, an embarrassing parental legacy of superstition. The last thing my father demanded was blind obedience to the Word; insisting that *na-aseh v'nishma* did not mean what it had been assumed to mean, he explained: *na-aseh*, we shall live, experience, acquire the capacity for judgment, and only then *v'nishma*, shall we deliberate and decide—the Jews wandered forty years in the wilderness not to atone but to discover. Every *din* (law) was pertinent to daily living, every *mitzvah* self-sufficiently good, and none presented itself in the nimbus of fear of an "above," a "beyond," a "hereafter."

Dr. Yosef Dov Soloveichik, the distinguished Orthodox authority, explains this attitude in an essay *"Ish Halachah"* (The Legalist), in the April-September 1944 issue of the rabbinical quarterly *Talpiot*. Jewish law is so wonderfully intertwined with the physical world that a field or a brook recalls to the "legalist" a vast area of jurisprudence, and the new moon, as he blesses its appearance, recalls the cycle which "determines the months, the seasons, and the holidays for Israel, and which is verified by exact astronomical calculations." The Halachah is rooted in the realities of the physical world.

Thus, hypothetically at least, it is possible for me as a nationalist Jew to go through life not believing in God, yet observing most of the Halachic prescriptions. One of the great forebears of Dr. Soloveichik, the famous 19th-century Reb Chaim Wolozhiner, heir of the Gaon of Vilna, allowed for just such a circumstance. "Continuous prosperity," he wrote, "comes only through the practical *mitzvot*, and hence it is imaginable that a man who sits in the *succah* all seven days, roasts the Passover offering, and tastes of the *matzah* shall have done God's will even though he may, God forbid, deny the existence of God."

It was the ethical intent of Halachah that was central in the kind of Jewish home in which I was brought up. Fasting was required only several times a year, but performing a *mitzvah* always involved charity and regard for others. Words like *erlichkeit* (honesty) and *orentlichkeit* (uprightness) were pivotal in the "ethical culture" of my father's house.

Although a secularist myself, I have generally opposed those restrictive and parochial forms of Jewish secularism which raised a single, sometimes very transient episode or motif in Jewish history above all

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others and hailed it as the substance of Jewishness. Yiddishism has been a very obvious instance of this. Also Jewish socialism, which assumed that the basic conditions prevailing in the general community were duplicated point for point in the Jewish Pale; and finally the Ethical Culturists, who tried to separate Jewish morality from its historical-national context.

The restrictive secularists of an earlier day were wrong in branding Judaism as anti-secular; the Jewish religious existentialists today are wrong in declaring secularism out of bounds to Jews. History, as I read it, shows traditional Judaism to have been in steady evolution toward secularism. Judaism is debate, not dialogue; monologue and often even dialogue are the manner of faith; debate is the manner of philosophy and jurisprudence. Judaism combines both philosophy and jurisprudence, and that is the essence of Halachah. By impeaching secularism and exalting theology, the Jewish existentialists impugn the basic elements of my Jewishness, as well as those elements in American society that have made it possible for Jews here to live a more decently human life than in any other *golah*.

Two names come most readily to mind in connection with the new American Jewish theology: Abraham Joshua Heschel and Will Herberg. Heschel is not a *ba-al t'shuvah;* he has long taught in Hebrew religious seminaries; whatever his private spiritual travail, he has never strayed. He can claim his role as a re-interpreter of Hasidism by the right of natural succession, as a descendant of one of the great dynasties. For this reason Heschel's neo-Hasidism is authentic in a way that Buber's, whatever its merits, could never be. There is a strong element of *volkstimlichkeit* ("folk feeling") in his presentations, so that the secular Jew can receive them almost like Halachah, delighting in the parts but not accepting the whole. A contemplative religionist, Heschel offers one his religious philosophy but he does not attempt to impose it.

Herberg, who most typically expresses the new American Jewish theology, is quite different. Like Niebuhr, he wields sociological weapons to impugn liberalism, humanism, and secularism; he is active and assertive and wants to change American society. For this reason he is of immediate concern to me as a secularist American and Jew.

What are the roots of Herberg's theology? His book *Judaism and Modern Man, an Interpretation of Jewish Religion* (1951) lists few sources that would indicate familiarity with the latter-day *anshei halachah* (legalists) or, for that matter, with Hasidic *volkstimlichkeit*. The major influences on him have been, in the order in which he himself gives them: Reinhold Niebuhr, Solomon Schechter, Martin Buber, and Franz Rosenzweig. Schechter's writings afforded him his "first appreciation of how vital and relevant, how contemporary rabbinic tradition can be"; "I have almost without exception followed his interpretation of that tradition." "To Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig I owe not only my basic 'existentialist' approach but also . . . my understanding of how to establish my religious existence in Jewish terms in the modern world."

But "what I owe to Reinhold Niebuhr in the formation of my general theological outlook," he states in the Foreword to *Judaism and Modern Man,* "every page of this book bears witness." In an appreciation of Niebuhr in the Union Theological Seminary *Quarterly Review* of May 1956, Herberg calls his own book on Judaism "avowedly Niebuhrian in temper and thought." He goes on to say:

> My first encounter with the thought of Reinhold Niebuhr came in the later 1930's. I was then at a most crucial moment in my life. My Marxist faith had collapsed under the shattering blows of contemporary history. . . . I was left literally without any ground to stand on, deprived of the commitment and understanding that alone made life livable. . . . What impressed me most profoundly was the paradoxical combination of realism and radicalism that Niebuhr's "prophetic" faith made possible. Here was a faith that transferred the center of its absolute commitment to what was really absolute—the transcendent God—and was therefore able to face the real facts of life unafraid,

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with open eyes. . . . What I do know is that this "meeting" with Niebuhr's thought—I did not yet know him personally—quite literally changed my mind and my life. Humanly speaking, it "converted" me, for in some manner I cannot describe, I felt my whole being, and not merely my thinking, shifted to a new center. I could now speak about God and religion without embarrassment, though as yet without very much understanding of what was involved.

HERE then is a Jewish theologian who became a *ba-al t'shuvah* through the agency of a Lutheran clergyman whom some fellow Christian theologians have labeled "neo-orthodox"—a Protestant who, although indisputably philo-Jewish in his conduct and preachments, nonetheless insists, doctrinally, that "it was the Roman law, the pride of all pagan civilization, and Hebraic religion, the acme of religious devotion, which crucified the Lord," and that "the record is pretty plain and the fact that the Jewish elders rather than the Roman soldiers were the real crucifiers is supported not only by evidence but by logic. The prophets of religion are always martyred by the religious rather than by the irreligious. The Romans, being irreligious, were not sufficiently fanatical to initiate the crucifixion."

The essential affinity between Herberg and Niebuhr was from the outset sociological. Like Niebuhr, Herberg was at one time drawn to Marxism. Like Niebuhr, he still subscribes to some of its insights, and resorts, for his own purposes, to its dialectical method. Repudiating the whole of Marxism while still appreciating some of its parts, Herberg, like Niebuhr, also repudiates the Enlightenment and all of humanistic liberalism. The latter he lumps together with Marxism as "utopian" and dangerous because it encourages man, with his "sinful nature" and "diseased reason," to overrate his own limited capacities for good and strive for the perfection which is God's alone. In short, the humanistic liberal deems himself capable of establishing heaven on earth by his own sovereign efforts and without the interposition of "grace." In Herberg's own words, man must invest his "faith in the true Absolute" and "commit himself to God without qualification and reservation."

Clearly, he is not an ordinary *ba-al t'shuvah,* but a seeker after a specific kind of Jewishness and Jewish doctrine. Judaism must replace for him a "man-made true Absolute" with a "truer Absolute" that will not disillusion him as Marxism did; because this "truer Absolute" is God, it cannot be tested by man-made history, but only by God-graced time.

Although Jewish tradition has not downgraded man while upgrading God as the existentialists have done, it has never quite believed that man had the capacity for discovering the "true Absolute," and only on occasion has it demanded *kavanah* of him, commitment "without qualification and reservation."

"The *dinim* [laws] of the Torah have been called *halachot,*" wrote Rabbi Chaim Wolozhiner, "because the principal thing is observance of the *mitzvot,* and not the clinging to the Living God." How closely the kind of religious commitment Herberg desiderates resembles the demands of a secular absolutism is evident from a passage he quotes from Rosenzweig, stating that there are truths a man "cannot prove true except with the sacrifice of his life, and finally . . . those the truth of which can be proved only by staking the lives of all the generations." *Kiddush ha-Shem,* as I read Jewish tradition, has less often meant the sacrifice of one's life than demonstrative action, the offering of an example. Jews died at the stake less often because they sought to bear witness (prove the truth) than because they would not bear false witness. Truths that require for their verification the "staking of the lives of all the generations" seem closer to the medieval Christian and the contemporary totalitarian tradition. That Franz Rosenzweig should have embraced this concept was not surprising, because this *ba-al t'shuvah* to a personal Halachah was, like his antipodal predecessors, the early German Reform rabbis, intent on some sort of reconciliation between Judaism and the Lutheran environment in which he lived.

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This Lutheran environment was, for religious and ethnic reasons, sin-obsessed. Marxism too is sin-obsessed, in an intensely secular way that nevertheless smacks of the Inquisitorial and thus has its own medieval reminiscences. It is from Lutheranism and Marxism that Herberg's obsession with sin derives. With ardent appreciation he writes of "Niebuhr's rediscovery of the classical doctrine of 'original sin,' which religious liberalism and secular idealism combined to deride and obscure." And elsewhere he has written: ". . . the perfectionist has no sense whatever of the depth of evil and unreason in sinful man"; ". . . sin is a frantic attempt at self-absolutization"; ". . . sin is one of the great facts of human life. It lies at the root of man's existentialist plight. In the last analysis it is sin and the fruits of sin from which we require to be saved"; ". . . this sense of guilt is the mark of our human condition."

Guilt is obviously used here in quite another sense than the psychological one, although Herberg likes to point to the fact that depth psychology has confirmed these theological insights. And though Herberg does emphasize the traditional Jewish *t'shuvah,* how differently from Heschel he does so!

ALTHOUGH Hasidism has been, in certain aspects, a sin-conscious movement, Heschel takes a far more qualified position on "sin." "The absence of the awareness of the mystery of evil is a tragic blindness of modern man," Heschel writes, yet when Niebuhr "characterizes evil as an inevitable fact of human existence," it is "difficult from the viewpoint of Biblical theology to sustain Niebuhr's view, plausible and profound as it is." "It is profoundly true," writes Heschel, "that goodness may turn to cruelty, piety to fanaticism, faith to arrogance. Yet this, we believe, is a perpetual possibility rather than a necessity, a threat rather than an inevitable result."

Yosef Dov Soloveichik, expressing the "legalist's" displeasure with the habit of "poking one's finger at the painful spot of sin," denies the inevitability of the chain reaction of sin, because man, by exercise of moral choice, can in his present and future conduct transform into *mitzvah* what has been conceived in sin. He also tells us that when his renowned forebear, Reb Chaim Brisker, was requested by the great Rabbi Yitzchak Blazer of Petersburg to introduce the sin-obsessed, ascetic *musar* into his yeshiva's curriculum, he replied: "Castor oil is prescribed for those who need it; to prescribe it for the healthy would be disastrous." Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook warned of "occasions when the inner morality stirs so fiercely in man" as to "upset the harmony of life." He counseled that "the most important thing is spiritual wholeness [perfection], and that man should not be depressed if he has sinned, but should seize the Torah," because "the world is full of harmony; the reverberating echoes of its internal morality penetrate all creation, and never has the soul of man been completely sinful."

Neither Herberg nor even Niebuhr asserts man's "complete sinfulness." Nevertheless, the difference between their emphasis and that of traditional Judaism is unmistakable, even though one may discover, as Herberg has, passages in the Talmud that in isolation convey the impression of a sin-preoccupied culture. It remains that Judaism, or Jewishness as lived, has disproved Herberg's contentions; a guilt-ridden people would have been unable to survive inwardly the constant censure and intimidation to which they were subjected in the Christian world.

Herberg habitually introduces categories into Jewish history that are foreign to it, on the assumption that what happened outside Jewish history had also to happen inside it. This often leads to serious misreadings of Jewish history—misreadings that show the extent to which he has carried prejudices of his Marxist days with him into the Noah's Ark of his *t'shuvah.* "Neither the Synagogue nor the Church," he writes, "can deny its share of responsibility for the fateful schism between religion and the

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movement for radical social reform that has come to be known as socialism." Under both Synagogue and Church, "institutional religion became more and more identified with the upper classes of society," and "the religious spirit became increasingly permeated with a life-denying otherworldliness stemming from sources far removed from Hebraic spirituality." Conceding that the Jewish community "was itself outside the bounds of official society and at the very best maintained a precarious existence," he argues that, nonetheless, "in its own way and under its own conditions," the Synagogue, too, was guilty of "sanctifying existing forms of economic exploitation and political privilege." Calvinism and British Puritan radicalism admittedly contributed importantly to humanitarian reform, yet among Jews

> hardly a trace of the radical activism of the prophets was to be discerned in conventional religious life. Legalistic conformism and otherworldly quietism met and sustained each other. Forces of innovation and discontent could find only peripheral expression, further and further removed from the center of official religion. Amorphous lower-class revolt is to be detected in the various Messianic movements and emphatically in Hasidism, while bourgeois reform interests came to the fore in the Haskalah. But none of these impulses could find either understanding or adequate room for development within the established religious order. The breach became open and irreparable when labor socialism appeared on the scene in the latter half of the nineteenth century. For Judaism, far more than Christendom, socialism came into being as a deep schism within the religious community, which had hitherto been virtually identical with Jewish society. The Synagogue, no more than the Church, proved able to find place for the new social forces that were coming to the fore and claiming their rights in community life.

But is it not misleading to balance a capitalized Synagogue, as Herberg does, with a capitalized Church? The Church was indeed a state, forced to relinquish its authority in temporal matters, yet still retaining tremendous holdings and power. The synagogue was merely a place for study and worship. New synagogues sprang up wherever a dissenting individual or group could gather a *minyan* about them. Religious authority was vested in the rabbi, who belonged with the economically dispossessed. His legal opinions, based on a long tradition of Halachah, eventually reached rabbis throughout the world. The local *kehillah* oligarchs, who formed a temporal body, could exercise no religious coercion except through the agency of the rabbi, and he alone was the instrument of the Halachah. The threat of repudiation by his rabbinical peers usually sufficed to check any rabbi who in the weakness of his flesh might have yielded to the commands of the *parnassim* (local notables).

As FEUDALISM declined, the rabbinate became preoccupied with the application of Halachah to the new social and economic problems presented by modern times. The great 17th-century legalist, Rabbi Mendel Krochmal, produced on this subject a whole volume of Responsa, which included his invalidation of a poll tax by which the rich had hoped to affect the result of *kehillah* elections. In the 19th century, Rabbi Moshe Sofer (called the Chasam Sofer), Rabbi Akiba Eiger, and Rabbi Meyer Leibush Malbim pronounced decisions that reflected a deep social awareness. When asked to define a rabbi's function, Chaim Brisker, who lived into the 20th century, replied: "To speak out against the humiliation of the lonely and rejected, to assert the dignity of the underprivileged and to protect the exploited from their exploiters." These utterances were not "peripheral expressions"; these men were at the very center of the Jewish religion.

On information from indignant *balebatim*, the Chasam Sofer was twice arraigned before the authorities, once on a charge of subversion that was punishable by death. The Malbim, on a similar charge, was prevented from preaching for a year by governmental edict, and ultimately banished from Russia. In every century rabbis resigned their positions and moved from *kehillah* to *kehillah* rather than surrender to pressure and distort the social intent of

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Halachah. Herberg's equation of Church and synagogue reflects the persistence in him of an obsolescent Jewish radicalism that rejected the synagogue's ritualism as an "opiate" and denounced its nationalist orientation as incompatible with working-class solidarity.

We have seen how Herberg finds the synagogue equally guilty with the Church of indifference to the problems of the social order. How does his existentialist theology interpret the roles of Church and synagogue in the religious order? He bases himself on Rosenzweig, who defined

> the twin vocations of Israel and the Church as covenant-communities: "Israel to represent in time the eternal Kingdom of God, Christianity to bring itself and the world toward that goal." So defined, the functions of Judaism and Christianity in the divine economy are seen to be organically related—part of one vocation—and yet irreducibly different in their orientations: Judaism looking inward to the Jew; Christianity looking ever outward to the Gentiles, who, through it, are brought to the God of Israel.

Herberg qualifies this by adding that "even for the outgoing function of the conversion of the Gentiles, Israel remains indispensable, though now indirectly so." He then quotes from Ignaz Maybaum, one of the last anti-Zionist ideologues of the Reform rabbinate: "Church and Synagogue, conscious of their election, know the difference between their places in the world. . . . The mission of Judaism is to endure till the end of the world as the people of the King to whom one day all nations will bow down. The mission of Christianity is to preach to the heathen, to Christianize the countries of the world and the soul of the people."

To assign Christianity a role complementary to Judaism, as Herberg does, suggests an involvement with Christian theology that not even the most radical of the early Reform rabbis sought or would have welcomed. The Reform rabbis were concerned solely with the status of the Jew in Christian society, at no time with the status of Christianity in Jewish history. They tried to win new dignity for the Jew within Christian society in the best way they knew how—by stripping the "esoteric" from Jewish ritual and by elevating the Dispersion from a penance and a humiliation to an election and a vocation.

But Herberg's new American Jewish theology interprets the most tragic schism in Jewish history as predestined by the design of the Jews' "mission." This brings him very close to the Niebuhrian equation of Sinai and the crucifixion, and invests with anti-traditional and preternatural significance something that from the Jewish viewpoint was an accident of history and politics. The crucifixion of Jesus in Palestine some two thousand years ago might have had considerably less effect on the fate of Jews if, at a certain juncture in world history, Islam had not lost out to Christian arms, thus surrendering large sections of Jewry to Christian domination. The present emergence of Israel and the immigration into that country of Jewries from the East, coupled with the fading away of European Jewish communities, may in the future rescue the Christian-Jewish relationship from theological history and restore it to ordinary history.

IN REVIEWING Will Herberg's latest book, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*, James V. Mullaney wrote as follows: "Mr. Herberg's piety is of the will—love, obedience, fidelity. By selecting the existentialist approach to the Biblical Jewish tradition and excluding all other sources, Mr. Herberg has cut himself off from that uncomplicated love of truth which rejoices in every articulation of the truth." Herberg has always sought one truth: the Messianic. "Hebraic religion," which he, like Niebuhr, describes as the "fundamental religious affirmation and commitment held in common by Judaism and Christianity," has been singled out by Herberg to achieve, not only theologically but also secularly, the Messianic aims that socialism has so far failed to achieve. His one and only truth remains the Messianic truth, which, though a part of Judaism, is hardly its core:

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. . . whatever the immediate future may bring, it seems clear that there is now emerging for the first time in two centuries a real basis for the reconciliation of the ancient foes [religion and socialism] a real possibility for the end of a schism that has wrought such havoc in our civilization. . . .

In order to preserve itself as a humane and democratic force in the present-day world, socialism has found it necessary to abandon also the prophetic urgency of its calls and its apocalyptic appeal. . . . [However] men cannot engage in any great and enduring work, involving frustration, hardship and sacrifice, without some sense of vocation and urgency, without some conviction of the lasting significance of what they are doing and without some promise of fulfillment beyond their own limited powers. The social movements of our day, disoriented and deflated by the horrors of the past three decades, do not possess such an ultimate standpoint and are therefore in constant danger of degenerating into visionless opportunism and futility. . . .

[Consequently] it now remains as the task of our time to reintegrate the socialist idea, the idea of militant action for social justice, into the transcendent eschatology of Hebraic religion. In the eschatological passion of the Prophets, the social radicalism of our time can find the power and the vision to work within history for the fulfillment of history, while realizing that it is not in the time of man or by his hand that the work can be accomplished.

All this seems to indicate that Herberg's interest in the Jew is in his redemptive-theological dimension. He seems hardly to notice the great contemporary events in Jewish life that exhilarate and frighten, the terrible uncertainties that menace millions of Jews. With his attention riveted on the larger Messianic design, he is inclined to see the individual living Jew as only incidental to it.

Like 19th-century Reform Judaism, which claimed a special "mission" for the Jews to the nations, Herberg is obsessed with salvation and the redemptive role of Jewry—paradoxically enough, seeing how he otherwise wrathfully renounces the Enlightenment and the religious liberalism it gave rise to, which the Reform movement preeminently embodied. "The history of salvation, which is the authentic form of Hebraic faith," he writes, "is the story of the gracious effort of God to bring a perverse and rebellious world back to the intent of creation through an elect community set apart for that purpose." However, the very concept of salvation is new to Judaism. As Rabbi Robert S. Gordis has recently pointed out:

The idea of salvation . . . is, to be sure, central to Christianity. It is, however, so far from basic to Judaism that no Hebrew term for the concept exists in the vast expanses of Jewish religious literature, from the Bible through the Talmud and Midrash to the medieval philosophers, and even modern writers have yet to find an adequate Hebrew term for the idea.

The parallelism of Herberg's existentialist Judaism with 19th-century Reform Judaism is also apparent in his attitude to Israel. His emphasis on *galut* (exile) as a vocation is in direct succession to the onetime anti-Zionist ideology of the radical Reform rabbinate. Herberg's position must, of course, take account of the fact that the Jewish state is no longer an idea but a reality. He concedes that in Israel, within the framework of her "national life," the essential ethics of Judaism "can be given some measure of concrete embodiment." But he stubbornly argues that

the antithesis between the Jew as the Son of the Covenant and the Jew as citizen of his secular community that gives rise to the peculiar tension of Jewish existence, is basically no more overcome for the Jew in the State of Israel than in the United States, for the secular society of the State of Israel is no more to be simply identified with the covenant-community than is any group of Jews elsewhere in the world.

He even dissents sharply from one of his mentors, Martin Buber: "But it is necessary also to remember what even Buber sometimes tends to forget, that there is an 'unperformed task' for the Jew in the Galut as well, and will continue to be throughout history"; and this "unperformed task" devolving upon every Jew individually is "to 'sanctify the Name' and to help redeem the evil time."

But this concept of the "unperformed task," which was the rationale of the Jewish

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political and theological radicalisms of an earlier day, appears in a macabre light after the Nazi horrors visited on Jewry in Poland, the center of the various Jewish movements for cultural autonomy, and after the terrible fate of the Jews under Soviet Communism. Nevertheless, Herberg's words are not without point in the context of the contemporary American Jewish environment.

American Jews today are in many ways in the same position as Germany Jewry was in the 19th century. They have only just emerged from the ghetto of their immigrant condition. They are still in the process of acquiring position and status in the general society. Only in the past few decades have they begun to set their impress on American letters, to enter industries and professions once shut tight against them. However, decreasing economic discrimination only underscores the problem of social exclusion, which must, at least hypothetically, threaten their advance in all the other areas. The radical religious reformers in Germany claimed their right to participate freely in German society, on the ground that the synagogue was as authentically German as the Church. This is precisely what Herberg claims for American Jewry today: that Judaism is as authentically American as Protestantism and Catholicism, the three forming the "triple melting pot." But the test of his doctrine of the triple melting pot is whether Protestant America is ready to accept an antithetical faith, Judaism, as another denomination like Catholicism, and whether the synagogue can accommodate itself fully to the American scene without sacrificing its authenticity. This remains to be seen.

WHY has Herberg's new theology gone so largely unchallenged among American rabbis? Primarily because it responds to the needs of that same rabbinate in the crisis that it is at the present undergoing. Many Americans feel guilty because of their relative well-being in a chaotic world, and American Jews in particular are inclined to feel guilty about the exceptional fate that has been theirs in a time that saw six million Jews perish in Europe, and further millions undergo persecution and worse in the USSR. And the rabbinate is all the more vulnerable to these guilt feelings because it now finds itself without a vocation.

At the turn of the century the American rabbinate interpreted its traditional vocation in keeping with the demands of the times: the rabbi ceased to be the judge and interpreter of the Law, and became a prophet. Stephen S. Wise and Judah L. Magnes gave us the prime examples of the embattled prophet-rabbi denouncing wrongs wherever he saw them and joining with his Christian colleagues in preaching the social gospel to an age of "robber barons." And they also spoke for the harassed among their own people and for the Return to Zion.

But the social gospel has since been embodied in the humanitarian legislation of a welfare state. Israeli ambassadors speak for the Restored Zion. The American Jewish community in its second and third generation does not require the intercession of its rabbis in public affairs. Yet the American rabbi, although now wholly identified with the complacencies of his prosperous community, still maintains the prophetic posture. The result is that he is left without a real vocation. The ensuing discomfort, which would be hard on any man, is all the harder on those whose tradition dictates concern with morality and ethics.

Yet the American rabbis are not truly without a vocation. Rabbinical ordination prescribes that the Jewish pastor is "to teach and to judge"; it prescribes Halachah, not prophecy. The American rabbi needs only to find his vocation by embracing it. American Jewry does not require admonition about "sin," but instruction in its own traditions. The rabbi can serve, instead of perform, if he turns his face from Christian existentialism and prophecy (which in Jewish tradition has never been independent of Halachah), and sets it toward the Law and the examples given in the works and lives of such men as Rabbi Chaim Wolozhiner and Rabbi Kook.

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The attraction of Herberg's thought for some members of the American rabbinate can also be explained by the factors that account for the attraction Niebuhr has for the Christian clergy. The new theology, rabidly anti-secular, confuses secularism and paganism with a plausibility which draws its apparent justification from the Nazi and Soviet attack on religion, although freedom of religious opinion and expression is one of the cardinal principles of authentic secularism. The new theology also tends to confuse the humanist faith in mankind with the apocalyptic utopianism of the totalitarian movements.

Jewish existentialist anti-secularism runs counter to the plain historical truth that the Jews knew their greatest social, economic, and civil advances after the Enlightenment, under the spiritual influence of secular humanism. The destruction of the medieval ghetto, the emergence of Yiddish literature, and the renascence of Hebrew literature, were direct results of the growth of liberal secularism. The State of Israel itself owes much to the awakened conscience of a secular humanist society shocked by the tragedy of the Jews. The great gains of the Jews in American society are the fruit of American secularism. Herberg has moved so far in the other direction that while he concedes that "the reintroduction of religion into public education in any significant way" may be "no longer practicable, or indeed desirable," he quotes with approbation a statement by Henry P. Van Dusen, president of Union Theological Seminary, that "unless religious instruction can be included in the programs of the public school, [Protestant] church leaders will be driven increasingly to the expedience of the church-sponsored school." These views are set forth in an article in the Jesuit magazine *America*, "Justice for Religious Schools" (November 16, 1957). The sociologist Herberg agrees that the reintroduction of religion into the public schools would not be within American "historical tradition," but the theologian Herberg chooses to describe this exclusion of religion as a "historical prejudice."

This is another of the many paradoxes of Herberg's new theology. It is custom-made for the United States, and yet its anti-secularism is, by his own admission, contrary to American "historical tradition." Its Judaism, cross-fertilized with Christian existentialism, is contrary to Jewish tradition. Judaism, if it is to have any meaning for the secular, or even for the religious Jew, must justify its existence in terms of its own traditions, without seeking parallels or affinities in Christianity.

American society is not the first and not the only one in which the Jew has been pressed to identify himself exclusively as a member of a religious community. Jews have felt this pressure since the French emancipation. Napoleon established a Sanhedrin and instructed it to produce a Franco-Judaism. Later this became the major issue for German Jewry. History would seem to indicate that all Jewish communities which in modern times tried to limit themselves to an exclusively religious identification lost their virility and declined. The new theology does not seem to have learned the lesson of the past, that the Jews have survived through maximal perseverance and minimal accommodation.

And yet the new theology, and Will Herberg's specifically, has contributed appreciably to the growth in self-awareness as Jews of the American Jewish community, by advancing challenging theses which compel the American Jew to study the basis and essence of his Jewish affiliation.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

MORDECAI, HAMAN, AND AHASUERUS

Excerpts from Midrash and Talmud

THE Purim story occupies a surprisingly prominent place in Talmudic and Midrashic literature. Not only does the Talmud supply a wealth of commentary and explication of the Book of Esther, but the number of midrashim based on the Megillah is far greater than on any other book of the Bible. The following narrative, which constitutes an expansion of the last chapters of the Book of Esther, has been compiled from several different sources: *Abba Gorion, Targum Sheni,* and the tractate *Megillah* of the Talmud. The selection is taken (with slight stylistic changes) from *The Purim Anthology,* edited by Philip Goodman and published by the Jewish Publication Society of America (1949).

WHEN Haman had satisfied himself that the tree intended for his enemy was properly constructed, he repaired to the Bet ha-Midrash, where he found Mordecai and all the Jewish school children, twenty-two thousand in number, in tears and sorrow. He ordered them to be put in chains, saying: "First I shall kill off these, and then I shall hang Mordecai." The mothers hastened thither with bread and water, and coaxed their children to take something before they encountered death. The children, however, laid their hands upon their books, and said: "As our teacher Mordecai liveth, we will neither eat nor drink, but we will perish exhausted with fasting." They rolled up their sacred scrolls, and handed them to their teachers with the words: "For our devotion to the study of the Torah, we were to be rewarded with long life, according to the promise held out in the Holy Scriptures. As we are not worthy of this, remove the books!" The outcries of the children and of the teachers in the Bet ha-Midrash, and the weeping of the mothers outside, united with the supplications of the fathers, reached to heaven in the third hour of the night, and God said: "I hear the voice of tender lambs and sheep!" Moses arose and addressed God thus: "Thou knowest well that the voices are not of lambs and sheep, but of the young of Israel, who for three days have been fasting and languishing in fetters, only to be slaughtered on the morrow to the delight of the arch enemy."

Then God felt compassion with Israel, for the sake of His innocent little ones. He broke the seal with which the heavenly decree of annihilation had been fastened, and the decree itself He tore in pieces. (Abba Gorion 37-38)

On that night, Ahasuerus became restless, and sleep was made to flee his eyes, for the purpose that the redemption of Israel might be brought to pass. The archangel Gabriel descended, and threw the king out of his bed on the floor no less than three hundred and sixty-five times, continually whispering in his ear: "O you ingrate, reward him who deserves to be rewarded." . . . (Abba Gorion 38-39)

That night the throne of the King who is King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, became unsteady, because He saw that Israel was in great distress. The sleep of the king on earth fled, for he had seen in his dream Haman taking the sword to slay him. He became agitated and arose from his sleep. . . .

He spoke to his servants: "Call Haman to me." They said to him: "Behold, he is standing outside." The king said: "The thing is true which I saw in my dream; he has come only in this hour to slay me." He continued:

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"Let him come in." Haman entered before the king. The king said to him: "I wish to exalt and aggrandize a certain man; what shall be done to him?" Haman said in his heart, for the seed of Esau speak in their hearts but never reveal their secret with their mouths, as it is said: *And Haman said in his heart* (Esther 6.6): "He does not desire to exalt any other man except me. I will speak words so that I shall be a king just as he is." Haman said to the king: "Let them bring the apparel which the king wore on the day of the coronation, and the horse upon which the king rode, and the crown which was put upon the head of the king."

The king was exceedingly angry because of the crown. The king said: "It does not suffice this villain, but he must even desire the crown which is upon my head." Haman saw that the king was angry because of the crown; he said: *And let the apparel and the horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes* (Esther 6.9).

The king then said to Haman: "Make ready, and go into the royal treasure chambers and take from the wardrobe a purple covering, a raiment of fine silk, adorned with fringes and costly stones and pearls, having bells of gold on its four corners, and golden pomegranates on every side. Bring also from there the large golden crown which was brought to me from the Macedonian province on the first day that I ascended the throne, and go invest Mordecai the Jew with all these marks of distinction." Haman answered and said: "There are many Jews in Shushan the capital by the name of Mordecai; to which of them shall I go?" The king said: "Go to Mordecai, the Jew, who spoke well about the king, and who sits at my gate."

When Haman heard these words he was in great trouble, his countenance was changed, his sight grew dim, his mouth became distorted, his thoughts confused, his loins languid, and his knees knocked one against the other. He addressed the king: "My Lord King! There are many Mordecais in the world, and I do not know about which of them you have spoken to me." The king in reply said: "Have I not told you that I mean Mordecai who sits at my gate?" "But," rejoined Haman, "there are many royal gates, and I do not know of which gate you have spoken to me." "Have I not told you," said the king, "that I mean the gate which leads from the harem to the palace?" Haman said: "This man is my enemy, and the enemy of my fathers; I would rather give him ten thousand talents of silver; only let not this honor be done to him." The king replied: "Go and give him ten thousand talents, and he shall rule over thy house, and this honor shall also not be withheld from him." . . .

Haman said: "Messengers with letters and decrees have already been sent out to all the provinces of the king to destroy the people of Mordecai; let these letters be revoked and let not this honor be done to him." The king answered: "The letters which I sent out I invalidate, and this honor shall not be withheld from him." . . . (II Targum 6.10-11)

THEN Haman took the apparel and the horse and went and found Mordecai with the rabbis sitting before him.

Haman said to him: "Arise and put on this apparel and ride on this horse, for so the king desires you to do." He replied: "I cannot do so until I have gone into the bath and trimmed my hair, for it would not be good manners to use the king's apparel in this condition." Now Esther had sent and closed all the baths and all the barbers' shops. So Haman himself took him into the bath and washed him, and then went and brought scissors from his house and trimmed his hair. While he was doing so, he sighed and groaned. Said Mordecai to him: "Why do you sigh?" He replied: "The man who was esteemed by the king above all his nobles is now made a bath attendant and a barber." Said Mordecai to him: "Wretch, and were you not once a barber in Kefar Karzum?" (So a sage recorded: Haman was a barber in Kefar Karzum twenty-two years.) After he had trimmed his hair he put the garments on him, and said to him, "Mount and ride." He replied: "I am not able, as I am weak from the days of fasting." So Haman stooped down and he mounted by standing on his back. (Megillah 16a)

Then Mordecai returned to the gate of the palace with great honor and dignity; but Haman went to his house covered with shame, sad and his head covered over. (II Targum 6.11-13)

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THE STUDY OF MAN

MAX LERNER'S AMERICA

The Middlebrow in the Age of Sociology

RICHARD CHASE

IT SEEMS clear that the amassing of new knowledge about American civilization in recent years has been accompanied by a general loss of political and scientific intelligence, a new mediocrity of taste and opinion, and a new suspicion of radical ideas and nonconformist behavior. In two and more decades of introspection we have forgotten that the radical ideas of democracy, as well as scientific and literary ideas, must be granted a measure of intellectual autonomy and respect if they are to be made effective in our lives. It has become the custom to ask, not "is this or that idea correct?" but "what will happen to me, what will it reveal about me, where will it place me, if I profess it?" We have saturated and obscured ideas with prestige and power values, or with psychiatric and sociological symbolisms. The mood of sociology has settled on the country like a blight, from Madison Avenue to the "communications media" to the universities to the Pentagon.

To be sure, we have learned a great many facts about ourselves and our culture. Yet the more facts we know about America the more bewildering and unknowable does it seem. (In reply to the social inquisitors and cultural snoops of recent times and their perpetual question, "What is America?" one is tempted to paraphrase Fats Waller, who, when asked, "What is jazz?" said, "Man, if you don't know what it is, don't mess with it.") These are some of my reactions to Max Lerner's monumental effort of the higher journalism which he calls *America as a Civilization**—in which, I should add, I read Mr. Waller's words of wisdom on the subject of jazz.

Strangely, Mr. Lerner says in his Foreword, "Americans are beginning to turn a searchlight on themselves and their civilization, and interpret both to the world. The present study is intended as a trial essay in this direction." This is not my sense of things. Americans have been turning the searchlight on themselves for a hundred and fifty years, more intensely than any people have ever done, and never with such concentrated and indeed narcissistic attention as in the last twenty years. And I must say that Lerner's book looks less like a "trial essay" than the gravestone of an epoch—so much does it have the air of stock-taking and summation, so little distinguishable is its intellectual quality from the idols of modern social inquiry, so acquiescent is the author in things as they are.

True, *America as a Civilization* is an impressive feat of synthesis and exposition. The author's versatility is great, his general savvy-

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*Simon and Schuster, 1036 pp., $10.00.

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ness in whatever field he is surveying is unmistakable, and he retains his usual readability. His twelve long chapters lead us through a thousand large pages of discussion of America's history and heritage, the concept of "American Civilization," race and place, the culture of science and the machine, American capitalism, the political system, class and status, the life-cycle of the American, the social matrix of character, American beliefs and opinion, the arts and popular culture, the place of America as a world power.

Despite the weight of his task and the width of his canvas, Lerner's acknowledgments of assistance from others in "this collaborative work" which "belongs not to me but to the collective of American scholarship" are perhaps over-generous. Still, it is hard really to *like* a book that has been written, as Mr. Lerner says this one has, with the help of no less than nine assistants, secretaries, and students, and parts of which have been submitted in manuscript to approximately one hundred and fifty philosophers, journalists, publishers, economists, sociologists, editors, foundation officials, music critics, art critics, and so on. Alas, the unfortunate Tocqueville and Veblen, whom Lerner so frequently cites, did not have one hundred and fifty collaborating "key authorities," as the dust jacket calls the author's lonely crowd of advisers.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Lerner makes many references to the past, his subject is the America that has evolved since about 1933, the era of what he calls the "Big Change." His time-span is the "quarter century during which Americans transformed their family structure, population growth, suburbs, energy resources, mechanization, corporations, trade-unions, class structure, and mass media almost beyond recognition." He is concerned with how the American "heritage" expresses itself in this new America, the heritage which included "the expanse of space, the mixture of race, the pluralism of region and religion, the fresh start, the release of energies, the access to opportunity, the optimism and pragmatism of a society in motion, the passion for equality." He wants to discover the "total style" of the American, as well as America's "inner civilization style." Nor does he neglect the European origin of the modern man—the mobile, restless, striving man, the amoral man of energy, mastery, and power, the man "for whom the walls have been broken down." This Faustian type haunts Mr. Lerner's pages. Also, curiously enough, and despite the "Big Change," the archaic image of the Horatio Alger man is persistently resurrected. He turns up, for example, in the section called "Growing Up in America," where we are told that the American youth is made to feel that "anything is possible and everything is fraught with far-reaching meanings. There is a sense of limitless potentials. . . . At home, as in school, the archetypal prizes held up are the big ones and the stories told are the success stories." The American boy, Mr. Lerner says, is told that he can be President if he works hard enough in our "swaggering society" with its "expanding economy" and its "feeling of unlimited life chances." (Query: who swaggers?) Lerner has some predictable trouble reconciling the Faustian and Alger man with the new, conformist, "other-directed" type whose caution, mediocrity, and limited goals he describes in other pages. Yet in keeping with his method throughout, he speaks of diversities and contradictions and says (correctly no doubt) that the American's "dynamism" stems from the interaction of diverse characteristics. The various personality types combine in an "American personality which is mobile, ethnically diverse, energy-charged, amoral, optimistic, genial, technic-minded, power-oriented."

Although Mr. Lerner tends to speak slightingly of moralists (liking, as he does, the "amoral" American), he is himself a fairly consistent moralist. The lesson he teaches is (to exaggerate a bit): Woe to whatever does not square with the American Personality; woe to the contemplative or lazy man; woe to the fastidious intellectual; woe to the man of conscience and the man of puritan will; woe to the "unadjusted" man and other such "marginal Americans" who "have not yet found themselves within their new setting." (Can these words have been written by an author who professes a debt to Walt Whitman? With Whitman it was not a matter of finding oneself within a setting, but of making the setting answer better to the self.)

I should add that Mr. Lerner, being

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genial throughout his book, is not really angry with nonconformist types. He is merely contemptuous of them ("contemptuous" is not too strong a word, I believe) because they are so frivolous or perverse as to set themselves against Necessity. Mr. Lerner does not say "Necessity" or "History" or "Economic Fate," as he might well have done twenty years ago. He says "plurality," "dynamism," "mobility," "mediation," and "emergence"—words which suggest the new idols of power in American social thought.

As for his general method and assumptions, Mr. Lerner says that "we have moved beyond both political and economic man." Not that politics and economics are unimportant, but they give us distorted images of America if we try to see it from their point of view. Nor is the moral and intellectual approach now fruitful. Thus we find the author who once told us that "ideas are weapons" now suggesting that ideas are irrelevant (and we find the author who once told us that "it is later than you think" now suggesting that America is exempt from the tragedies of time and of history and exists in a timeless dimension called—apparently after Toynbee—"extended genesis"). Mr. Lerner says that he is not looking for "causation" but rather for "relation" and "interaction." He is looking for the "inner civilization style" at the point "where cultural norms in America shape personality and character, and where in turn the human material and the energies of Americans leave their impact on the fabric of their culture." This general procedure has a two-fold result, aside from the fact that it allows the author to assemble a vast collection of data. First, it breaks down nearly all contingent determinisms and presents us with a pluralistic, formless, intangible, fluid culture in which a bewildering variety of polarities are brought into balance by a sort of Emersonian law of benign compensation. Second, it erects the Goddess Mobility as the new determinism.

As for his guiding image of American civilization, Lerner writes:

> my own tendency throughout this book is to approach America in terms of its nature as a richly pluralistic society. The pluralisms I find in American stock and regions, in American loyalties, in the American character structure, in religion and the sects, in political and economic life, I find also in the class system and even in the ruling groups.
>
> Within the frame of this pluralism there are what may be called *power and prestige clusters*, which include the social elite ("Society"), the intellectual elite, the big-wealth and big-income elite, the top church leaders, the opinion industry elite (press, radio, TV, movies, advertising agencies, public relations men), the government managerial elite, the corporate managerial elite, the labor managerial elite, the military elite. Merely to list them thus conveys a sense of what I have said in my discussion of power in American life—that the whole of American society is power-saturated.

I would certainly not claim that this list does not correspond with reality or that, given all these data, it is easy to make sense out of American society or to define the inner workings of so pluralistic a culture by means of any given dialectic. But you can't say anything that is both concrete and generally significant unless you bring to bear on your subject some clearly delineated procedure, as did Tocqueville with his political method, Veblen with his "polysyllabic" categories, Beard with his economic bias, C. Wright Mills with his "power elites," or Riesman with his character types. *America as a Civilization* more or less rejects all such approaches on the ground that they are too rigid, intellectualistic, or pessimistic.

What Mr. Lerner does notice over and over again, whether talking about politics, capitalism, racial groups, regional influences, or class differences, is the forces that make for mediation among contradictions. Of this one might quote dozens of examples. Having, as it would seem, very much overestimated the diversity of American life, Lerner looks always for the kinds of cohesion and harmony which will assuage differences and make contradictions benign. Thus the hero of *America as a Civilization* is the great new middle class with its "broadly mediating function" and its heroine is the American woman, who is "the converging point for all the pressures of the culture." These two mediators are to be found at their most characteristic in the new suburbs, in which the tendencies of small-town life and of city life are mediated. With all this mediation going on, one wonders what in the end there will be left to mediate.

To be sure, Mr. Lerner is right to say that the flexible middle class and the American

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woman are in large part responsible for the energy and stability of our civilization. But what impresses me is his apparent assumption that mediation and the breaking down of contradictions are good things *in all departments* of our civilization. This strikes me as a disastrous form of cultural mysticism.

The magical power or *mana* of mediation, and also of variation, is "mobility." Of course, by this word Lerner means initially "social mobility," more specifically the continuing invasion of the middle classes by new groups from below. But mobility is "the overmastering fact about American society" as a whole, and in Lerner's imagination it takes on more and more meanings, becoming somehow the inner principle of our political and economic flexibility and of the American's physical, moral, psychic, and language styles. (All that is left out is a presentation of Moby Dick as an archetype of mobility.) Mr. Lerner even sees mobility in the efforts of sexual partners to achieve orgasm at the desired time.

The myth of mobility in *America as a Civilization* is perhaps derived in part from Toynbee's idea of the "élan" of successful civilizations. Sometimes it is rather like Henry Adams's Virgin, with her humane, emanating, cultural force. Sometimes it seems to be akin to the Life Force, as imagined by some of our early naturalistic novelists, a force which makes for both uniformity and diversity but remains indifferent to human intervention and to individual desires.

As a literary critic, it interests me (odd as the comparison may seem) how much akin Lerner is to the younger "new critics," who read literature for the myths and symbols it may be made to yield. They are generally intent on an epistemology rather than a sociology of symbols, yet they tend to read literature as Lerner reads culture. And what the symbol, the myth, what incarnation and catharsis are to the critics, mediation and mobility are to Lerner—namely, they are ways of absorbing contradictions and objective truths into a mystic centrality.

It is no surprise that *America as a Civilization* misinforms us that Faulkner is "antinaturalist," deals largely in symbolism and allegory, and that his world is "drenched with a sense of sin and the fall from grace which was at once religious and classical." (This reminds me of Mr. Lerner's statement that "the journey of the personality in any culture is like walking under water, or struggling past heavy obstacles in an enveloping dream"—which sounds like someone trying to look at social realities through the symbolist atmosphere of some of Poe's tales or of the late novels of Henry James.) The Faulkner Mr. Lerner has in mind is not the writer who wrote what he wrote. It is Faulkner as interpreted by certain literary critics. It is also Faulkner the idol, the cliché as presented in the pages of *Life* magazine and as imagined by many troubled souls who have never read him.

IN THE chapter called "The Arts and Popular Culture" the author says many interesting and true things. Yet taking an over-all view, he seems even less able to differentiate himself from conventional opinion in this chapter than elsewhere. Mr. Lerner asserts the general health of the popular culture and the cohesive and unifying force exerted by the shared symbols it furnishes through the mass media. The assumption is that although the "elite arts" can have no beneficial effect on the popular culture, they must under penalty of death constantly absorb the energy, and apparently the forms and values, of that culture. It would be tedious to cite all the passages in which the author contradicts himself as to whether the artistic and intellectual life is split in America, as compared with Europe. His theory about mobility dictates that in America the elite and the popular should be close together if not entirely amalgamated, and that in traditionally class-ridden Europe there should be an irremediable cleavage. The trouble is that on the whole the facts, many of which Lerner notes, destroy the theory. Traditionally, it was Europe where the same art forms were enjoyed and appreciated by whole communities, and America where from the beginning every cultural critic had to recognize the split between highbrow and lowbrow, elite and popular.

It seems never to have occurred to Mr. Lerner, so foreign is it to all his predilections and ideas, that, not only by historical fate but as an instinctive measure of cultural health in an equalitarian society, America made and preserved a cleavage not only between tastes but between forms of intelli-

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gence. Thus we have always had highbrows and lowbrows, and there has always been a split between theory and practice, knowledge and experience, disinterestedness and practicality. In keeping with his belief that mediation and the middle way are beneficial everywhere in a civilization, Mr. Lerner is against cultural cleavages in art and thought. In this he agrees with the triumphant middlebrow opinion of the Eisenhower Age. And in this he is certainly wrong.

Consider also the fact that for Mr. Lerner the "brow" terms refer merely to matters of taste and to "prestige values." When Van Wyck Brooks used these terms about forty years ago in *America's Coming-of-Age*, they were recognized as referring to different kinds of cultural animus, but, more important, they were seen to be intellectual categories and were used with a polemical and reformist intent. Mr. Lerner, being interested primarily in cultural symbols, has performed a de-intellectualization of these as of all other categories. To put it another way, as Brooks used the term "highbrow," it meant basically "an intellectual"; as Lerner uses it, it means basically "a snob" or a member of an "elite." This blotting out of intellectual qualities, this castration of effective ideas by prestige values and consumption tastes and by the mystique of cultural power, is at the root of our modern failure of mind.

Let me note at this point what Lerner has to say about the popularity of Hemingway and Faulkner. Because of paperback books we have become, he says, a "nation of readers" (hard to square with the statement some pages along that paperbacks reach "something less than 10 per cent of the American population"). In the fact that Hemingway and Faulkner are known to "millions of readers" Mr. Lerner finds evidence of a salutary healing of the split between elite and popular culture. He has to admit, however, that Hemingway and Faulkner reach millions of people, not as writers who have written to be read, but as "popular figures who could not maintain their isolation even if they wished to." Now the implication of this is inescapable: our great writers are most valuable as shared commodity or culture symbols, such as our civilization, aware of the necessity of wholeness and cohesion, turns out in quantity through the mass media. Only intellectual carpers and moralists, Mr. Lerner seems to say, will wish to point out a distinction between what Hemingway's and Faulkner's books mean and are, and what the popular images of Hemingway and Faulkner are—or will wish to deplore, one might add, the bad effect on the quality of some of the books of these authors consequent on their having themselves succumbed to the image the public has of them.

Hemingway and Faulkner could become idols of the tribe, by the way, but not Freud. "Such key ideas of the Freudian school as the Oedipus complex and castration fears made their appeal to a narrow group but could not hope for a wider appeal in the commonsense atmosphere of American popular thinking." This suggests that ideas are not assertions to be judged right or wrong but commodities that must "appeal." I doubt very much indeed that Mr. Lerner would say that the ideas of Norman Vincent Peale are right because they are popular, even though he strongly implies that Freud's are wrong because they aren't. The intelligence in Mr. Lerner that recognizes the greatness of Freud (as we can see in other passages) disapproves of Norman Vincent Peale. But he has got it in for the highbrow and the intellectual, and so his intelligence will not defend Freud against the adverse judgment of popular thinking.

WHICH is only to refer again to Mr. Lerner's middlebrowism. His middlebrowism in the 1950's is what his radicalism was in the 1930's—the unexamined, almost unrecognized habitat of his mind, where (as he will see twenty years from now) he makes some of the archetypal errors of conventional thought. Thus, one of the blind spots of *America as a Civilization* is that, although it speaks of the highbrow and the lowbrow, it says next to nothing about the middlebrow. Is this not astonishing in a book which purports to comment on the cultural scene at the present time, when middlebrowism complacently rules our intellectual life? It cannot be simply that Lerner's method impels him to look only for forms of cultural power and not at the (pusillanimous) world of ideas, because in fact he constantly looks at both. All the more striking then is his failure to cast a critical eye at or even to discuss middlebrowism.

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which has been made by publishers, editors, and professors the main "power center" in matters of taste and opinion, insofar as these are articulated as ideas. The question to test Mr. Lerner's analytic prowess would be, why, despite the energies of mobility, is the middle way of our cultural life so conformist, so smug, so dead on its feet, and so rich in power over opinion? Criticism is meaningless if it cannot detect the place of cultural power in the life of intelligence. But instead of confronting the reigning middlebrowism, Mr. Lerner is content, on the one hand, to warn us about certain potential shortcomings in popular culture, and, on the other, to snipe away at "the intellectuals."

In fact, one of the things that most persistently haunts the reader of *America as a Civilization* is the animus against intellectuals—an animus the reader is genially invited to approve and share. We are all supposed to be against powerless malcontents such as "moralists, traditionalists, religious absolutists, bourgeois-baiting Marxists . . . professional cultural pessimists," "class-obsessed radicals," "fearers and doubters," and "the blinkered critics of American life." May the shades of the blinkered critics of yesteryear—Whitman, Henry Adams, Veblen, Randolph Bourne—rise up to haunt us all!

THE PORTRAIT OF GERTRUDE STEIN

HELEN NEVILLE

"It doesn't look like her now, but it will."
—Picasso, of his portrait.

IT DOESN'T look like her. It's much too new.
She needs to die a little more, to be
reclaimed by that which made her, which she made.
So it may send her back,
its paint still fresh upon her, to become
the lady of the Portrait, rightly named.

O Gertrude! posed and framed,
you look like a Picasso, nothing more.
Time is a rose, and like a rose must climb
upward through ghostward face and limb,
and acres of our later bloom or blight,
to paint Picasso's century;
showing you standing at the door—

a stately and enduring theme
of fractured planes and beaten prose
and precedents askew;
half concierge half host,
half sybil half hermaphrodite:
crying a welcome to the Lost,
who came to find the rose-extended Rose
in Paris midnights of Picasso blue.

HELEN NEVILLE's verse has appeared, over a number of years, in various periodicals, including *Poetry*, the *Paris Review*, the *Nation*, the *New Republic;* she is also represented in *New Pocket Anthology of American Verse*. Miss Neville is a native of Brooklyn, and now a resident there.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

"Northrup" Judaism

To the Editor of Commentary:

"Northrup's" version of Judaism ("Judaism in Northrup," by Evelyn N. Rossman, November) is the result of five causes: criticism (philosophic and scientific criticism of Judaism, leading to rejection); conditions (conditions rendering Jewish living difficult, so that one becomes conditioned to regard it as unimportant); confusion (confusion about principles and practices, resulting from ignorance and misinformation about Judaism); conformism (the tendency of a minority group to conform directly to the ways of the majority, or to adopt a negative attitude to its own culture because of a conscious or subconscious feeling of inferiority); and complacency (the product of a materially sated society, the members of which tend to . . . adopt the path of least resistance, spiritually and intellectually).

The first cause should have been the most important, and perhaps to a few it is, but for most, including intellectuals, it is not the cause. Judaism is not a collection of customs and folkways which should be perpetuated in order to keep the Jewish people alive; but rather the Jewish people should be kept alive in order to perpetuate Judaism. For Judaism is a way of life which aims to make its adherents aware of the purposefulness of the cosmos and the sanctity of life, not solely through teaching and believing but through living.

. . . Many Jewish intellectuals did not trouble to discover a mature version of the essential truths of Judaism because they, too, were afflicted with ignorance of Judaic thinking and with an inverted conformism. They found escape from their minority status by becoming . . . members of an intellectually or socially "liberated" majority.

. . . When Jews are not complacent, they will seek knowledge and challenge. Such Jews will have no difficulty in discovering that a Judaism whose teachers included Moses, Isaiah, Hillel, Maimonides, Israel baal Shem, and Rabbi Abraham Kook, a Judaism which teaches that the world has a purposeful Creator, that man has a moral duty to battle hopefully for righteousness, and that we must sanctify our life through our senses, has at least as much to offer as any other possible alternative. "Northrup" Jewry is no worse than the generations of the prophets. By constant appeal and challenge to the hearts and minds of their contemporaries, the prophets ultimately succeeded in building a spiritually and intellectually alert people. We can do the same, not merely by analysis and disparagement but by challenge and work.

We have tried to do this in our small community of one hundred fifty families. After eight years of effort we are still far from the ideal community, but we have a number of families who are eager to grow—and are growing—out of "Northrup" Judaism. Aside from our three week-end services, two monthly cultural groups . . . and a comparatively good school, something has happened recently which indicated definite Jewish growth. We had discussed the Commentary article on "Judaism in Northrup." The discussion brought out that the solution to "Northrup Judaism" was education and a more positive Jewish home life. One member suggested, and all agreed, that we extend our forty minutes of Sunday round table by one-half hour. Then the president of the Men's Club, which sponsors the Sunday morning program, stated that what we need is a program of basic Jewish living, which they should and could follow. Accordingly, a committee consisting of the writer and two religiously-minded and informed lay members was appointed to draw up the requested program. . . .

Judaism is not to blame for "Northrup." The causes transcend the Jewish community. Only persistent, challenging, and hopeful appeals to the hearts and minds of our Jewish people will cause the majority to become positive Jews again and complete human beings.

(Rabbi) Nathan A. Barack
Congregation Beth El
Sheboygan, Wisconsin

"Angry Young Men"

To the Editor of Commentary:

I can hardly believe that Dan Jacobson's "America's 'Angry Young Men'" could be the leading article in the December Commentary for any reason other than the author's repu-

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tation. Not only was Mr. Jacobson's examination of the San Francisco writers unintelligibly short and superficial, but it seemed to be based on Mr. Jacobson's failure to understand *Howl* and *On the Road*. . . .

Mr. Jacobson says that *Howl* was so easy to write that the San Francisco customs officers should have had nothing to fear, but the customs officers certainly did not seize the poem because Allen Ginsberg was shirking his duty as a poet. Mr. Jacobson wants explanations and demonstrations, but *Howl* is a poem of prophecy and judgment, and Mr. Jacobson's inability to understand what is being judged reflects upon him and not upon Mr. Ginsberg. [As to *On the Road*], Mr. Jacobson cannot understand why supermarkets and suburbs are "justification" for drinking, stealing cars, or using drugs, and yet an understanding of the relationship between these aspects of our social scene would be necessary in order to derive any meaning at all from either *Howl* or *On the Road*. Certainly it is not the task of the authors to "prove" the relationship.

Mr. Jacobson desires modesty, restraint, and discipline, but perhaps these are some of the values against which these authors are rebelling, the form of this rebellion comprising much of their meaning. . . .

EUGENE MORNELL

Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I had purchased the *Evergreen Review* last summer, and after finishing Rexroth's introduction I was stricken with fear that I might be one of the "squares" who couldn't comprehend the excellent writing he promised would follow—and thus—by definition—I would be inferior. . . . Dan Jacobson's excellent article has rescued me, and I am eternally gratefully. . . . at least I know there is another Rexroth "square" on earth and a mighty lucid one too.

JOSEPH NATHAN

South Orange, New Jersey

More "Cozzens"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Let me congratulate the editors of COMMENTARY for having the courage to "sing outside the chorus" (as the *America* reviewer of *By Love Possessed* expressed it). I refer, of course, to Dwight Macdonald's magnificent analysis of that impossible book, in your January issue.

FORTUNATA CALIRI
Department of English
State Teachers College
Lowell, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Compliments to Mr. Macdonald for his lucid exposé of Cozzens' labyrinthian style. . . . Is it far-fetched to equate the reviewers' high-pitched praise to Madison Avenue's copy?

GILBERTE ALTBAUER

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

[Mr. Macdonald's article] is a grand job. . . .Why on earth is the book entitled *By Love Possessed*? Where does any concept of love, as many romantics still cherish it, ever enter its pages? . . .

SOPHIE L. GOLDSMITH

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Yesterday evening my husband and I had a merry time reading "By Cozzens Possessed" in the January issue of COMMENTARY, which friends had loaned us after hearing us wonder whether the *By Love Possessed* we read could possibly be the same book the reviewers reviewed. We found Dwight Macdonald's comment very refreshing and had such a good laugh . . . that one of our children came in and asked, "Are you drinking wine?" . . .

NANCY SOMMERS

Princeton, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I feel enormously grateful to Mr. Macdonald for relieving my great loneliness. I thought I was the only one . . . who thought the book [*By Love Possessed*] dull, pretentious, unreal, and totally without humor, by an author who hated people and himself. . . .

GEORGIANA REMER

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Just a note *re* Dwight Macdonald's article on Cozzens. This has needed saying for a long time; and Mr. Macdonald's comments on book reviewing in this country are right to the point. I hope you will have more articles by Mr. Macdonald in the future—I consider him our top journalist in the U.S.

ROBERT A. LEARNED

Hollywood, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am one of the matrons described in the *New Yorker* cartoon who had to beat and flail my way through Cozzens' book after Labor Day. . . . [Mr. Macdonald] has given me back some of my self-respect! . . .

DOROTHY BROWNSTONE

Clear Lake, Iowa

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To the Editor of Commentary:

Dwight Macdonald's excellent article on *By Love Possessed* has somewhat restored what little confidence I had in my own critical perceptions—the ability to recognize and enjoy a good novel. . . .

Winifred L. Saltzman

Passaic, New Jersey

To the Editor of Commentary:

Thank you for your review of the Cozzens novel. . . . For a while I had the feeling that I no longer had any critical sense in literature, or that at age forty novels would no longer be fun. . . .

Haskell Rosenberg

Rochester, New York

American Sephardim

To the Editor of Commentary:

It is seldom that articles on the life of Sephardic Jews in America appear in the Jewish press. It is therefore the more regrettable that, on so rare an occasion, an inexcusably distorted view be given, as in the article by Leonard Plotnik, "The Sephardim of New Lots," in your January number.

That article is offensive in its many inaccuracies and distortions. In his desire to add color, the author has attributed to the Sephardic Jews of New York City, and more specifically to those living in New Lots, Levantine habits which might have been seen fifty years ago but which no longer prevail even in the Balkans.

Mr. Plotnik leaves the impression that the Sephardic Jews in America, living under old-time superstitions, keep to themselves, isolated from their Ashkenazi brothers, whom they look upon with contempt and derision. This is in sheer conflict with the truth. The Sephardim of New York have for many years worked together with the Ashkenazim in such general Jewish causes as the United Jewish Appeal, Israel Bond Drives, the Federation of Jewish Charities, ORT, HIAS, the Jewish National Fund, and other great Jewish organizations which the Sephardim support as individuals, through their congregations, and through their trade organizations.

Half a century ago, when the modern Sephardi immigration to this country began, the Sephardim had inevitably, at first, little contact with New York's mass of Yiddish-speaking Jewry, because the mother tongue of the Sephardic Jews who came from the Middle East was Spanish, Greek, or Arabic. . . . However, as the Sephardic Jew rapidly learned the language of the country and the Ashkenazic Jew made English his main instrument of communication, the Sephardic Jew drew close to his Ashkenazic brother, so that today the Sephardim and Ashkenazim work together not only in philanthropic causes but also in labor unions, employers' associations, and social clubs, and marriages between members of the two groups are very common.

Mr. Plotnik loses sight of the fact that the Sephardic immigration to the United States from the Middle East began only about fifty years ago, so that there is only one American-born adult generation of Levantine Sephardim, and not two, as he claims, while the mass settlement of the Ashkenazim in America is much older. The Sephardic population of the entire city is not more than 50,000, in the general Jewish population of over two million. It is obviously unfair to contrast the accomplishments of two groups so unequal in number. Mr. Plotnik further gives the impression that all Sephardic life turns around the "coffee house." The Sephardic coffee house is altogether a thing of the past in New York. Similarly, the so-called water pipe, the "narghile," as far as its use by Sephardim in America is concerned, is a museum piece.

The author makes the utterly baseless and absurd assertion that the wearing of the "Magen David" has a very special meaning for the Sephardi, signifying his separateness not only from the world of the Gentile but from the world of the other Jews as well. If the Sephardic Jew wished to accentuate his difference from his Ashkenazi brother, he would hardly use the Magen David, which is a symbol of Jewish unity.

Moreover, Mr. Plotnik's assertion that a Sephardi holds his Ashkenazi brother in contempt is cruelly false. For a brief period, the difference in language between the two groups made "*Zug, zug,*" ("Speak, speak") the remark of the Ashkenazi that was most often heard. Today it is forgotten, and the term "Yudak" as a designation for an Ashkenazi is quite unknown. It is equally preposterous to state that the Sephardim conceal or shy away from the word "Jewish." It is used wherever it is called for. Thus the name of our community is the Central Sephardic *Jewish* Community of America, and the name of the largest Sephardic *Landsmannschaft* is the Sephardic *Jewish* Brotherhood of America.

It is not the custom of the Sephardim, as Mr. Plotnik reports, to place food stuffs on the coffin coverings after an interment in the cemetery, or to spend a whole afternoon there eating after the funeral, or to carry on ceremonies all day long at an unveiling, with professional caterers taking care of the refresh-

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ments. All this is nonsensically untrue. The only custom that exists is to follow the ritual called for in the providing of the "mourner's meal."

It is nothing less than scurrilous when Mr. Plotnik accuses the Sephardim of looking down on the Ashkenazim as a "mixed multitude" of Jews who are descended from the rabble of Jerusalem and whose blood has a mixture of the Slavic element. It is equally an untruth that Jewish communal leaders ever went to Friday evening services in the mosques.

It is also not a fact that soon after the close of the 16th century the Jews of the Ottoman Empire sank to the rank of the ignorant laboring classes. Until the beginning of the 20th century they played an important part in Turkey and the other Middle Eastern countries, comparing most favorably with the role played by the non-Jews. They were often leaders in commerce, industry, banking, and the professions, and they were held in high regard by their non-Jewish compatriots. The influence of the Jews in a city such as Salonica was so great that on the Sabbath commercial activity practically ceased for much of the entire population of the city. These conditions existed up to less than fifty years ago.

While the HIAS has done outstanding work in assisting Jews from the Balkans newly arrived on these shores, just as it assisted Jews coming from other parts of Europe, it cannot be said, as Mr. Plotnik states, that passage of the Sephardic immigrant was paid by the HIAS. The Sephardic immigrant from Turkey in the 1900's came to this country with his last pennies and made a place for himself in this country through hard work, perseverance, and character. . . . Nor is it true that the Sephardic women were of lower-class origin or illiterate.

It would have been very expedient if all labor problems affecting Sephardic workers and employers could have been settled in the coffee houses, as Mr. Plotnik claims. In fact, the Sephardic worker or employer is not a law unto himself; he forms a part of the great labor movement of this city. The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union counts among its delegates and representatives many Sephardic men, and Sephardic employers have for over a quarter of a century been among the leaders in the skirt, blouse, and dress manufacturers' associations. Some of them have played important parts as consultants to such government agencies as the National Recovery Administration, Office of Price Administration, and War Production Board.

Mr. Plotnik is also very confused as to the type of community organization under which the Sephardic Jews lived in the Ottoman Empire. Their community organization was unified under the leadership of a Chief Rabbi and spiritual and lay bodies which regulated their religious, educational, communal, and social activities. The communal committees even had government-enforced powers to tax members. Naturally, such a set-up could not be duplicated in America. The Sephardic organizations here built up, as did the Ashkenazim, patterns of organization based on *Landsmannschaft*.

It is simply not a fact, as stated by Mr. Plotnik, that Sephardim from different groups did not, until recently, intermarry. Not only did Sephardim intermarry irrespective of their cities of origin, but they also have intermarried quite frequently with Ashkenazim. It is equally untrue that Sephardim from Turkey would not eat or worship with other Sephardim.

The author of the article is in error, too, about the date of the founding of the Central Sephardic Jewish Community of America. This was organized in the year 1941 under the influence of the late Dr. Nissim J. Ovadia, who served as its chief rabbi until his death in the following year. Rabbi Isaac Alcalay, who had come to the United States in the year 1942, then became the chief rabbi of the Community.

For Mr. Plotnik's information, it may be stated that all the Sephardic synagogues of New Lots are open not only on the High Holy Days, but on every Saturday, and some are open every day of the year. Moreover, New Lots has long had at least one Sephardic Hebrew school, and the Sephardim in New Lots have duly ordained rabbis who have given years of service and leadership to their community.

We hope that at some future time the author of the article, exercising a more scrupulous concern for facts, will study the life of the Sephardim in this city. Then his report will assuredly advance Jewish unity in America.

DAVID POLITI
President, Central Sephardic
Jewish Community of America
New York City

[*Mr. Plotnik will reply in the April issue.*]

Recession & Regulation

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read Professor Abba P. Lerner's article, "Halting the Current Recession" (February) with considerable interest. As usual he takes a forthright and original position on an important issue.

Begging the precise "causes" of the current (mid-February 1958) lower level of economic activity, there is every reason to suggest that

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the "monopoly power" which permits administered price-making, be it on the product or labor side, is undesirable from a general or social point of view. Of course, the individual firm or labor union thinks it is following a wise economic policy for its own group.

Perhaps Professor Lerner is correct when he says: "The time has come to wind up the deploring, the quoting, the preaching, and the declaration of conversion, and instead, by *regulating* administered prices and wages, to provide the restraint needed to protect the free economy from sellers' inflation" (my emphasis). As an economist who spent two years with the Office of Price Stabilization in Washington, I fully agree with Professor Lerner on the difficulties of price controls, and fear that the scheme he suggests might degenerate into this type of activity. But this is basically an administrative problem.

I suggest that Professor Lerner has properly diagnosed one vital aspect of the problem: ". . . existing so called anti-trust policies . . . have become in effect anti-competition policies and *need to be reconsidered*" (my emphasis). I would strongly recommend that *effective* anti-monopoly policies, *with respect to both prices and wages,* be instituted. Such policies should be carefully explained to the public in order to avoid adverse effects from either business or labor.

In a free private enterprise economy, I suggest that exhortations are generally *ineffective.* The experiences of World Wars I and II, and the Korean war, demonstrate this point as well as can be expected. I feel that Professor Lerner's suggestion deserves very serious consideration, as do other remedies.

SHERMAN SHAPIRO

University of Notre Dame
Indiana

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Professor Abba P. Lerner's article makes a very valuable and important distinction between price control, which he defines as the attempt to set prices below the figure that would "clear the market," or cause to be sold all the goods that could be produced in any particular line, and price regulation, which he defines as an attempt to find and fix a price which will bring about the sale of all the output that existing productive capacity in any particular line is capable of turning out. In general, such regulated prices would usually be lower than the "administered" prices now set by powerful employers' groups in many lines. For the big manufacturing companies, as we can see merely by looking around at the present employment and output situation, have set prices a good deal higher than the price which will tempt consumers to buy substantially all the output that could be produced. . . .

I would like to make one criticism to the effect that Professor Lerner, perhaps because of the limitation of space, has not given sufficient consideration to the fact that such price regulation would have to be applied simultaneously in a good many different industries in order to be effective. The steel industry and its currently lagging output can be used as an example. Lowering steel prices in order to sell more basic steel products would not be very effective unless the prices of automobiles, farm machinery, building construction, tubes and pipes, machine tools, and other important fabricated steel products were also reduced to the point where full output in these lines could be sold, thus generating a bigger demand for steel, which might otherwise not result just from reducing steel prices.

ALFRED BAKER LEWIS

New York City

Poetic License

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his brief poem, "On Carley Ridge" (January) Mr. Leonard Wolf makes three baseless assumptions that are typical of a kind of Jewish self-consciousness I find mawkish. One is that it's news when a Jew likes nature ("How Gentile nature was"). Another is that a Jew is something more than a man (what?). The third is that circumcision is a distinctive mark of a Jew. . . .

I think Mr. Wolf's poetic license should be suspended for three months.

DWIGHT MACDONALD

New York City

MR. WOLF *writes:*

The only assumptions on which my sonnet "On Carley Ridge" are based are these: first, that Jews in our society are generally conscious that they are Jews, and, second, that this self-consciousness may assail them in the strangest places. I do not assume, or assert, that "it's news when a Jew likes nature," though I may be entitled to believe that for many contemporary Jews nature is an awkward pleasure.

Mr. Macdonald, by taking thought, can answer for himself whether a Jew is more than a man. As for circumcision . . . perhaps Mr. Macdonald may grant that there is a difference between ritual and surgery.

LEONARD WOLF

San Francisco, California

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Civil Liberties

THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE. By WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS. Doubleday. 216 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

THIS volume, based on three lectures which Justice Douglas delivered in the spring of 1957 at Franklin and Marshall College, ranges over a wide variety of subjects in the field of civil liberties. The first lecture, on "Freedom of Expression" and the third, on "The Civilian Authority" (in relation to the military), deal in fairly comprehensive and unified fashion with major groups of issues. Unfortunately, the desire to deal with a wide variety of topics in three short lectures has caused Justice Douglas to lump a number of very diverse matters, ranging from the Federal loyalty-security program to freedom of religion, under the catch-all title, "The Right to Be Let Alone," in the remaining lecture. It is not an arrangement conducive to maximum clarity, and it seems to me to have the effect of reducing some major rights to a rather minor status.

On the whole, Justice Douglas presents a well-reasoned defense of a moderate libertarian position—though at first glance the position often seems more extreme than it is, because he tends to make his initial statement in absolute terms and add the qualifications and provisos afterward. (This may be due to his need, as a lecturer, to catch the attention of his audience first—something a carefully balanced statement is not apt to do.) He is most uncompromising in his defense of the rights of free speech and press. Here, he holds that the First Amendment imposes an absolute prohibition on any regulation of political advocacy, even of the most revolutionary kind, unless "speech is so closely brigaded with action that it is in essence a part of an overt act." He uses the "clear and present danger" test—but in terms of much more exacting standards than those of Holmes. For he holds that "From *Schenck* to *Dennis*, I know of no abridgment of freedom of expression which was properly sustained under the 'clear and present danger' test." Commenting on Judge Learned Hand's view that the prohibitions of the First Amendment are "no more than admonitions of moderation," he says: "The idea that they are no more than that has done more to undermine liberty in this country than any other single force. That notion is, indeed, at the root of the forces of disintegration that have been eroding the democratic ideal in this country."

In his discussion of the various Federal loyalty and security programs, Justice Douglas rightly criticizes the procedural and substantive injustices which they have produced. (Sometimes, however, he overstates his case; thus it is scarcely accurate to say that an employee "could be required to prove his loyalty beyond the shadow of a doubt" under a standard which permitted his dismissal if a *reasonable* doubt existed—even though some officials may have interpreted it in that way.) But he recognizes that beliefs and affiliations *are* relevant to fitness for policy-making or otherwise sensitive positions, and he appears ready to give the government carte blanche in dealing with the problem—as long as it does not characterize people as "subversives" or "risks." Thus he writes: "Men or women can be removed from sensitive jobs for good reasons or for no reasons at all. Employees can be reassigned or demoted or even dropped from the service. The evil which has arisen lies in the decree or order that publicly stigmatizes him by administrative decree for traitorous conduct or for dangerous thoughts or expressions." This approach has considerable merit, but it also involves substantial disadvantages which Justice Douglas does not discuss. An unlimited power to dismiss government employees, without assignment of reason or hearing, would avoid branding—but at the expense of depriving all government employees of *any* procedural rights. On the other hand, as soon as formal charges must be made or reasons for dismissal assigned, whatever the procedure which is used there will have to be some element of branding. It

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is a dilemma which can under present circumstances never be completely resolved if one believes, as Justice Douglas does and any intelligent person must, that "government need not sit supine and let subversives take it over or infiltrate it with spies." Nonetheless, it seems to me that we can get a lot closer to justice by a refinement of administrative procedures than by their abolition. But there is certainly no reason why the government should concern itself with an intangible, subjective, and emotionally loaded criterion such as "loyalty" when all necessary decisions can be made in terms of security. Nor is there any reason why security criteria should be applied to positions where they are not relevant, or why persons removed from sensitive positions on security grounds should not be transferred to non-sensitive positions, where this is feasible, instead of being penalized by dismissal.

As MIGHT be expected, Justice Douglas has little use for loyalty oaths. But he makes one surprising exception, declaring: "An oath of present loyalty to the government by a person taking public office or seeking it is certainly unobjectionable." In the case of elective office, to which he is here referring, it seems to me that a requirement that *candidates* take a loyalty oath in order to secure a place on the ballot imposes an improper limitation on the franchise. There may be some justification for requiring such an oath as a prerequisite to the assumption of executive—but not legislative—office, and there is certainly justification for requiring a candidate to *disclose* whether or not he is willing and able to take an oath of this nature. But if, in full knowledge of his unwillingness, the voters nevertheless wish to cast their ballots for him, they should be free to do so. (It should be noted that in the past, ineligibility to assume an office has not been regarded as preventing candidacy for it. Thus when Eugene V. Debs ran for President from Atlanta penitentiary, his conviction made him ineligible for the office.) In the matter of oaths, incidentally, Justice Douglas unjustly assigns Charles II responsibility for the Test Act (requiring all officeholders to take a religious test oath); actually, it was forced on him by his Protestant opponents in Parliament to get rid of his Catholic advisers.

Justice Douglas is especially worried by those developments which threaten to produce an ascendancy of the military over the civil power. He discusses the historic conflicts which have arisen, and points out that the civil courts are only able to review the decisions of military tribunals through the writ of habeas corpus, and in cases where there is a question as to the military jurisdiction. This is true because the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court is dependent on Congress, which has never given it the right to entertain appeals from military tribunals. He emphasizes that there should be no military jurisdiction over civilians, even in time of war, although he permits an exception for civilians accompanying the armed forces in the field. He points out that prior to 1863, even soldiers could not be tried for murder except by the civil courts. Yet he seems to leave a loophole for approving such actions as the trial by a military commission of the Nazi saboteurs who landed on Long Island during the last war—though there was no practical difficulty in the way of a civil trial.

Where the Constitution grants specific protections, Justice Douglas is usually inclined to accept it at its face value. But for issues bearing on civil liberties, but not specifically covered by the language of the Constitution, he resorts to what might be called a doctrine of implied limitations. This is not precisely a new idea; John Marshall did something very similar in *McCulloch vs. Maryland*, when he banned state taxation of a nationally chartered bank on the ground that the power to tax was the power to destroy. In respect to such matters as Congressional investigative power, however, Justice Douglas seems ready to carry this process rather further than his colleagues on the Supreme Court have yet chosen to do.

This book is not a comprehensive survey, and of those questions it does cover, some are dealt with only superficially. But within its limitations, it is a useful introduction for the general reader to some of the problems the United States faces in the field of civil liberties.

Isaac Mayer Wise

RABBI IN AMERICA. By ISRAEL KNOX. Little, Brown. 173 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by NATHAN GLAZER

RABBI IN AMERICA is one of the volumes in the Library of American Biography series, edited by Oscar Handlin; and if, as one assumes, it is the only volume to be devoted to

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an American Jew, Isaac Mayer Wise was a good choice. He combines in his career two aspects of American Jewish life that are not ordinarily seen or considered together. One is the story of migration and adaptation to a new country; the other is the story of the creation of American Reform Judaism, which is the part of American Jewish life that is most decisively cut off from the immigrant past, and most clearly an expression of the conditions found in America. And thus, one might argue, Wise was a better choice than, let us say, Brandeis, in whose life we find none of the immigrant experience, or, perhaps, Abraham Cahan, who, despite his phenomenal abilities to assimilate a new culture, remained identified with the relatively unassimilated immigrant East European Jewish masses until the end of his life.

But of course any biography, even of the one Jew to be included in the Library of American Biography, involves more than the selection of a suitable symbol; the man himself interests us, and we look forward to the illumination of a career that seemed to be characterized by enormous energy and a remarkably low degree of introspection and self-knowledge. We are first amazed, in any contact with the career of Wise, at the energy—the speed with which, barely arrived in this country, he threw himself into organizing conferences, writing prayer books, traveling to meet people who shared, or might share, his views; and later, the energy with which he edited two weeklies, ran a large congregation, conducted lower and higher schools, wrote books, and finally brought into existence the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Hebrew Union College, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

All this is well told in Israel Knox's account. Wise himself has done such a good job in telling the story of his early years in America that any biographer must feel a heavy burden upon him to do as well with the rest. I must say I hoped for more color and more detail—sheer detail—in this biography. Details pique one's curiosity—but one gets few of them here. What was the nature of the contacts that led Wise, a few years after he arrived in America, to an introduction to President Taylor, and, a few years after that, to the offer from President Fillmore of a position in the Library of Congress? One suspects that Wise was more interested in politics than we would conclude from anything Knox tells us. There is an interesting chapter on the parallels and differences between Wise's views and those of liberal Protestant theologians of the mid-19th century. And yet one hears almost nothing of any contact—through personal meetings, letters, books. After all, there were not enough Jews in Albany when Wise arrived—and perhaps not enough in Cincinnati, either—to keep him from making non-Jewish friends. But one hears little of this, too.

Details of Wise's personal life, which are unfortunately given in a perfunctory and official manner, might have helped illuminate this remarkable man, who was so clear and direct in action, and who was so confused and confusing in thought (despite Mr. Knox's really excellent summary of his views and beliefs, this impression remains). The Halachah was important; yet only the Ten Commandments need be observed. The Bible must be the basis of Judaism, and the Talmud must be discarded because of its legalism; yet the legalism of the Bible was, if anything, more repugnant to 19th-century man than that of the Talmud. Judaism was based on reason; yet the Biblical miracles took place. We live in an age of science and progress; yet Moses wrote the Bible.

Knox has seized on one element in Wise for emphasis and exposition, and indeed it was an important one for the future history of American Judaism: resisting the radical reformers who in their consistency were willing to discard everything in traditional Judaism and build up religion from reason alone, Wise managed to maintain a link, even if a weak one, with the historical past. It is this link that in a later time, when 19th-century enlightenment was to seem very far away, was strengthened in Reform so as to bring it closer to the main body of Judaism. From a historical point of view, I would agree that this is most important in Wise: it is indeed this element that permits a man like Israel Knox, who is close to the Yiddish-secularist tradition in Jewish life, to feel so sympathetic to Wise.

From the point of view of the reader interested in Wise as a man, however—and any reader of a biography cannot help but become involved with the man—one would have wished that the personal bases of Wise's confused yet so fruitful intellectual positions could have been further developed. From this book, and other sources on Wise, one gets the impression of a man who did not examine his own posi-

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tions intellectually, and indeed did not look into his own life very deeply. One suspects that he, like some other men of action, is the last man in the world one would have chosen for the purposes of a serious conversation, or as a friend. A hint of this would have improved a very worthwhile and useful introduction to Wise's career and thought.

Experimental Writing

SOMETHING ABOUT A SOLDIER. By MARK HARRIS. Macmillan. 175 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by STEVEN MARCUS

MARK HARRIS's new novel, *Something About a Soldier,* is not a successful novel in the sense that it stands by itself as a new realization of experience—it is, among other things, too self-conscious, too coy, too vaguely abstract for that. But, on the other hand, neither is it one of those familiar, dismal rehearsals of the novelist's "craft," in which the syllabus of Creative Writing 101 is recapitulated for our edification. Mark Harris is, rather, a genuinely experimental writer, which is something of a rarity among the younger American novelists. *Something About a Soldier* is a thoroughgoing experiment—in form, in style, in character, in conception. Mr. Harris is too alive to the true work of the novel, its discovery and investigation of new forms of experience, to be satisfied with its current popular conventions. And yet Mr. Harris is not, I think, experimental enough, not enough of an innovator; for though he abandons the usual conventions he fixes upon others which, though he tries them out tentatively and cleverly, and though they are rather advanced and sophisticated, are unable to infuse his material with the energy and freshness of vision he aims at.

Something About a Soldier is about the 121 days in the army during World War II of one Jacob Epp, born Epstein—his family has changed its name, and throughout the novel Jacob tries unsuccessfully to reassume it; though we never learn whether after he is discharged he does retrieve his patronymic, it is very clear that Mr. Harris is interested in Jacob's identity and in his confusion about it. Jacob comes from Perkinsville, New York, a euphemism, I suppose, for Scarsdale or Riverdale, or even perhaps for Peoria or Provo or Pitkin Avenue—again, and unfortunately for Mr. Harris's novel, we never know. A great-uncle of Jacob's fought in the Civil War: "He was left for dead on the battlefield but he got up and went home. There's a page about him in *The History of the Jews,* not a whole page but almost." Jacob's father, a successful pawnbroker, whom Jacob refers to as a "financier," lost a leg in World War I. Jacob himself is seventeen and just out of high school; he has a stratospheric IQ, an uncanny mechanical aptitude—in no time he is able to assemble his rifle faster than his platoon sergeant can—reads anything anywhere, believes in the war and in heroism, and says he loves the world. He is also in a perpetual daze: when one lens of his eyeglasses gets broken, he delays having it replaced, preferring to look out at the world with split vision; assigned to take charge of forty men on travel orders, he manages to lose them; his perceptions of people and his relations with them are fuddled, oblique, and disjointed.

Sent to Georgia for training, he meets two characters who are even less distinct than he: Dodd, his commanding officer, and Joleen, a girl who works in the PX. They all fall in love with each other, and Dodd goes to bed with

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Joleen, though Jacob does not. Through Joleen, whose father is vice-president of the local branch of the "Consolidated United Service Trades and Peanut Workers Union of America"—a union about as real as those organizations that Ginger Rogers used to go out onto the picket line for—Jacob gets involved with the neighborhood Communists. He wobbles about camp putting up stickers for the second front and against racial segregation in the army and is even chosen to do a little courier work, though actually he hasn't a clue to what any of this is all about. Gradually, he becomes disconsolate and dissociated. Finally, at Dodd's instigation he goes AWOL, is picked up by the MP's, and after a series of appalling incarcerations winds up in the "nutward," whence he is honorably discharged for medical reasons. He has, in fact, become quite mad.

WHO is Jacob? Mr. Harris is dealing with an established literary type, and it isn't long before the reader comes to respond to Jacob as one of that ancient company of blessed fools—the Parsifals and Don Quixotes, the Candides and Myshkins and Ike Snopeses, the idiot geniuses, the innocents who never learn, the suffering incorruptibles, the anti-heroic heroes, the screwball saints, the sadly comic Christs. He is one of those men who seem to have been born into the world in order to demonstrate its gratuitous brutality; in men like him we are meant to see the conspiracy against humanity that life itself can often seem to be. Paradoxically, Mr. Harris's Jewish American hero somehow turns out—just as does the hero of *The Assistant* by the very talented Bernard Malamud—to be the quintessence of "Christian" innocence and suffering: in Christian folk culture, the Wandering Jew is always on the verge of being assimilated to Jesus. To be sure, Mr. Harris's conception of Jacob has a certain literary conventionality to it, but it is his manner of developing this traditional character and story that is uncommon.

One of the difficulties in *Something About a Soldier* is in the way he does this. Mr. Harris chooses to present his mythical character without any of the objective clarity that myth usually imposes upon literature. Most of the time we come at Jacob through his fantasies, and Mr. Harris's prose is often on the point of dissolving into the formlessness of fantasy. Sometimes he brings it off; more often he fails:

"I loved you when you danced with the mop, and I smelled you and wanted to touch you, but I thought I better not. . . . In my mind I moved with you, and I'll move with you now . . . and you with me, and that's love.

"I must tell you, she said. You won't believe it, but it's true. I don't know anything. They never tell you anything, and you hear it so many different ways you don't know when you're hearing right from wrong. You'll think I don't love you, but it won't be I don't love you, it'll only be not knowing how."

Here Mr. Harris's prose is characterized by what Edmund Wilson once called pseudo-poetic booziness—this passage is written in the imprecise, sentimentalizing language of William Saroyan. Mr. Harris also experiments with Joyce and Dos Passos, and at one point succeeds in getting onto paper what must be the first recorded evidence of the literary influence of *Krazy Kat*:

"He hooked his hat on the wall, and she watched him, and he was handsome, and she mistrusted such hats, peaked, like policemen's hats. How stole? he said. How stolen?

"Shoot, she said, if I told you what I know you'd know as much as me. What do you wish, sir? We got very fine homemade soup, tomato, bean and chickennoodle.

"How about sandwiches?

"Pressedham, livwist, choppedegg, bacon, bacontomato, baconlettucetomato, frankonabun.

"But I must report, he said, how they were stolen, and pass the word to the Regimental Commander, and he must pass the word to Washington, and Mr. Roosevelt, and Mr. Churchill and Mr. Stalin, all must know.

"I'm not an employ of the Army, she said. I'm an employ of the PX only and not paid to answer questions of the Army."

Rummaging about in the warehouse of literature and popular culture to find adequate means for expressing this special kind of fanciful, quasi-vulgar, poignantly off-beat experience, Mr. Harris tends to become rather arch and self-protectively indirect, and sometimes it almost seems that he picks a "literary" way of dramatizing an incident merely for the sake of being literary.

The largest fault of the novel, however, is that it misses its best chance—we never really get a concrete sense of the army in it. There are only Jacob's fantasies about the army and almost nothing to rectify or modulate them.

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But at the few places where Mr. Harris does let external reality barge into his novel his writing becomes alive and truly original: there is a wonderful re-creation of a roll call in the army, in which Mr. Harris perfectly catches the magic that can flow out of a roster of typically exotic American names; the only thing I've read which is as good in its kind as this is in Whitman at his best. Another very impressive passage is about Jacob's experience in the stockade after he has gone AWOL. He is out of his mind by now, goes on a hunger strike and is locked up for several days in a coffin-like box called The Shelf. Here fantasy and hallucination come together with the unmistakable actualness of external fact, and the chaos and desolation of Jacob's existence, his frightening incapacity to feel or know that he is being tormented or punished, or even that anything is being done to him, are fully achieved. These are isolated passages, however; usually Mr. Harris is so absorbed in rigging up Jacob's musings and seeking out new techniques with which to express them that he fails to get at the object, or to get at it significantly and pointedly. Finally, one must say, his novel never really discovers what it is about.

Mr. Harris is both serious and talented, and he is going on his way. It is useless to make predictions about what novelists are going to do, but I feel that, as schoolmasters used to say of their young hopefuls, Mr. Harris bears watching.

Great Jewish Historian

YISRAEL BA-AMIM (Israel Among the Nations: an Essay on the History of the Second Temple and the Mishnah . . .). By ISAAC F. BAER. Bialik Institute (Jerusalem). 144 pp. I£2.800.

Reviewed by MILTON HIMMELFARB

PROFESSOR BAER of the Hebrew University, the distinguished medievalist and authority on Spain and Spanish Jewry, now is chiefly interested in early Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity. *Yisrael ba-amim,* based on his lectures to undergraduates, is paralleled by a series of studies that have been appearing in the Historical Society of Israel's quarterly *Zion,* of which he is an editor. It is a remarkable document, whether as a work of scholarship about the past or as a transparent prescription for the right nurture of the Israeli ethos in the present and future. It is also well printed, written in straightforward Hebrew, and equipped with a solid technical apparatus.

The period dealt with begins in the generations after Alexander the Great conquered Palestine together with the rest of the Persian empire, or roughly the early 3rd century B.C.E. Its end Professor Baer puts variously: narrowly and most infrequently in the 3rd century C.E., with the redaction of the Mishnah; more often in the 7th century, with the Arab conquest; preferably in the late Middle Ages, after Rashi and Maimonides; and sometimes as late as the eve of the French Revolution and the beginning of modern Jewish history. Periodization is a serious matter for a historian, because when he defines a segment in the flow of time as a historical period, he is saying that a unitary spirit informs the occurrences and especially the thought of that segment of time, and that what happens within it is less productive of change than the events marking its beginning and end. Baer's periodization, therefore, means that in his understanding of the career of Judaism and the Jews the example, tradition, and discipline established

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR Educated in Spain Américo Castro taught at the University of Madrid for nearly a quarter-century. After acquiring an international reputation, Dr. Castro joined the faculty of Princeton University in 1940. He has just been honored by a Special Award for distinguished scholarly accomplishments from the American Council of Learned Societies.

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by pietist (*hasidim*) farmers near Jerusalem early in the Hellenistic era transcend the independence won by the Maccabees, the Roman conquest, the destruction of the state and Temple, the rise of Christianity, and exile.

The Rabbis sought to obey the word of God: to love and revere Him, to do His commandments, and to mold a society ruled by justice and love, in which the relations between man and God, and between man and man in the earthly microcosm, would mirror the order of the heavenly macrocosm. The pillars of this society were an elite of saintly scholars and a larger mass zealous to be a holy community. It centered in Palestine but extended beyond, and it used Temple and state but could do without them. Its characteristic mode of expression was law, *halachah,* but its legalism was rooted in a mystical and indeed mythological outlook. The men who framed the Mishnah over the centuries were mystics, ascetics, and pneumatics who thought of themselves and were perceived by their followers as being filled with the Spirit.

THE HASIDIM of the generations before the Maccabean independence of the mid-2nd century B.C.E. were utopians with an uncompromising ethic. Most of their successors had to be less utopian, because they were faced with the needs of a real society and had some of the responsibility for governing it. These were the Pharisees. They found it necessary to condemn some things that their predecessors had preached and practiced, such as giving all to the poor, and they introduced the *prosbul,* a kind of legal fiction to circumvent the Biblical provision that the sabbatical year cancels a debtor's obligation to his creditor, because experience had shown that otherwise loans would not be made. Baer draws an analogy with what happened in Christianity, the utopianism of the early Christians being followed by the compromises of the state church of Rome.

According to Baer, those successors of the early *hasidim* who remained utopian were the Essenes. He grants the need for responsibility and compromise but admires the impractical utopians. The pressures and temptations to be realistic are so great, he implies, that men do not need much urging to take that course. It is harder to be utopian.

About the relation between Rabbinic and Greek thought Baer speaks in two voices. Mostly he cites influence and example. He attempts to show the influence of Plato, and he mentions the Pythagoreans as a possible model of a fraternity of masters and disciples engaged in intellectual and theosophical speculation, guiding a real community, and observing a ritual and dietary code. But sometimes he prefers to suggest that great societies, like great minds, independently think alike. In law actual Greek influence on the Rabbis was from contemporary Hellenistic practice, but Baer sees in certain property legislation of the founders of the Mishnah an unborrowed, spontaneous resemblance to the earlier law of Periclean or pre-Periclean Athens.

Besides being a work of scholarship and a kind of program for Israel, *Yisrael ba-amim* is also a sustained polemic against the positivist temperament in modern Jewish thought—the hardheaded, no-nonsense temperament. Jewish positivism regards mysticism, and even theology, as absurd, aberrant, un-Jewish. In religion, the positivist says that you have to obey the commandments; to be concerned about God and belief is unbecoming; *halachah* is the only thing that counts, and it has nothing to do with *aggadah*. If a secular nationalist, the positivist has no use for the spiritualizing exceptionalism of an Ahad Ha-am. If a scholar, the positivist follows Graetz in dismissing the Cabbala and all it represents as an impudent forgery. Baer has always opposed this frame of mind. The ostentatious absence of the Dead Sea materials from his discussion can be explained by his desire to avoid complicating his demonstration that the founders of the normative tradition were mystic, ascetic, and pneumatic. Showing this to be true of the sectarians would not help his case.

A close friend and associate of Baer's, Professor Gershom Scholem, in recent American lectures adduced other strong proof of the antiquity and normativeness of Jewish mysticism. A corollary of what Baer and Scholem have been saying is that the *Zohar* is less a forgery than a pseudepigraphon reflecting authentic tradition, and more generally, that the positivists have been presumptuous. When one thinks of it, it seems odd that they have been able to speak with such assurance for so long. The author of the *Duties of the Heart* was a judge on a rabbinical tribunal, the author of the *Shulchan Aruch* was a visionary mystic, and Elijah of Vilna was no contemner of the Cabbala.

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BESIDES Jewish positivism, what ideologies, assumptions, and prejudices more specific to Israel is Baer arguing against? What may he be trying to correct in his students?

The most striking thing about his book is that Baer feels he has to defend Judaism and the history of the Jews. Some Israelis apparently think that the Jewish tradition is negligible in comparison with the Greek, and he tries to show that this is not so. But there also seem to be some who think that Judaism is negligible in comparison with Christianity; and he has to assert and repeat that in vision, spirituality, and abnegation of self the Rabbis were the equals of the early Christians, let alone the imperial Christians.

A related attitude that Baer finds unacceptable has for its best-known spokesman Mr. Ben Gurion—a love of the Bible accompanied by a distaste for post-Biblical and *galut* Judaism, one kind of "negation of the Diaspora": ". . . the distant past is closer to us than . . . the last two thousand years. . . . Abraham . . . Moses . . . King David . . . the prophets . . . are closer to us than Rav Ashi . . . Maimonides . . . and in recent times all the Zionist ideologists." To which Baer answers that Rabbinic Judaism is the legitimate successor to Biblical-prophetic Judaism, not inferior and not less important. And since Mr. Ben Gurion admires the Greeks, Baer can make the point that it is post-Biblical Judaism which was affected by Greek thought and example.

TO THOSE negators of the Diaspora for whom statehood is the difference between life and a stunted, twilight existence, Baer's answer is that both the rise and the fall of the Second Commonwealth are subordinate incidents in his history. Without a state, to be sure, there may not be a sufficiently bracing challenge to conviction and doctrine; the fittest objects for moral guidance and criticism are the state and the market. Maccabean independence, therefore, as much by the opposition as by the assistance it offered, was helpful, but its disappearance was not fatal. States are not ends, they are useful means and tests of moral perfection. As for *galut,* it could impose only physical, not spiritual ignominy on the Jews.

To the cosmopolitans, who urge that Israel should seek out the greatest measure of cultural influence from abroad, Baer implicitly gives this advice: receptivity to foreign influence is good, provided that it is discriminating and that the new influence is harmonious or at least compatible with the tradition. Be careful about contemporary foreign culture, because it may be in a state of decadence; an earlier, more nearly classical, phase of the culture may be preferable. In any event, natural absorption is likely to be better than deliberate grafting. Best of all is to bring into being and maintain a spirit that will generate an independent achievement comparable with that of the foreign culture when it was classical. The capacity to do that is the test of Israel's health. Direct Hellenistic influence on the Jews of the early Mishnaic period led to an unprophetic emphasis on the sacrificial cult and to gilding the horns of bullocks in festal processions, while independent creativity produced laws like those of Hellenic Athens.

Against the Orthodox Baer can turn this argument around. The Mishnah combined the old and the new in the right proportions. The Rabbis knew they could not safeguard their heritage by freezing it, and the lesson of the Rabbis is to preserve the tradition by broadening it, creatively to naturalize good influences from the outside.

Finally, Baer dislikes *Realpolitik,* domestic or foreign. He knows that the best policy cannot always be followed, and even that the best may be the enemy of the more urgent real. But if there are to be departures from the best, Baer wants them to be grudging. Utopians are valuable in their own right. They

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also remind governors of the distance between the real and the ideal and keep them from becoming too fond of the real. Without the utopian insistence on an impossibly high morality, public life would decline to an intolerably low reality. In this last point Baer comes closest to a defense of the Magnes-*Ihud* spirit and the Hebrew University group associated with it.

Professor Baer's concerns are unlikely to cease being topical for some time to come. Obviously, they do not detract from his work as history; Gibbon, Ferrero, and Rostovtzeff also went to the past to discover or prove something about the present. After scholarly debate has made all the necessary corrections and modifications of Baer's thesis and facts, he will still be recognized as a great historian and philosopher of Jewish history.

European Unity

EUROPE AND THE EUROPEANS. A REPORT PREPARED AT THE REQUEST OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE. By MAX BELOFF. With an Introduction by Denis de Rougemont. Chatto and Windus (London). 278 pp. 25 shillings.

Reviewed by GEORGE LICHTHEIM

IN OCTOBER 1953 "seven eminent European thinkers" were invited by the Council of Europe—an inter-governmental body—to attend a round table conference in Rome. Among them were Signor Alcide de Gasperi; M. Robert Schuman, the French elder statesman; Professor Arnold Toynbee; and M. Denis de Rougemont, the French-Swiss historian who contributes an introduction to the present volume and clearly has had some influence on its more "federalist" sections. Two and a half years later, in March 1956, a study group of historians, economists, and others met at Strasbourg, under M. de Rougemont's chairmanship, to discuss once more the general problem of European unity in the present era. These deliberations have now been summed up for the general reader by Mr. Max Beloff who acted as *Rapporteur-Général* and also, it must be supposed, as an unofficial British delegate to an assembly largely composed of Continental adherents to Europeanism.

The volume under review, as edited by Mr. Beloff, thus represents a summary of two separate discussions attended by eminent statesmen, scholars, and publicists holding widely differing views on a variety of subjects. To top it off, there is the substance of a paper on European philosophy, by Mme. Jeanne Hersch of Geneva University, which goes at some length into subjects such as positivism, Marxism, and Existentialism. As though that were not enough, the second part of the book departs sharply from the content and manner of the first half (largely historico-philosophical in substance and self-consciously "European" in tone) by turning a critical searchlight on the political and economic steps hitherto taken to forward European unity. This section reads as though it had been composed by Mr. Beloff (with some assistance from Mr. Peter Wiles, the Oxford economist who attended the Strasbourg gathering) for the express purpose of pouring cold water on the participants at the earlier Rome meeting. By way of balance, M. de Rougemont's introduction to the volume, after paying due tribute to the objectivity of the *Rapporteur-Général*, denounces in no uncertain terms "the unnecessary pettifogging and malicious objections which the opponents of our union are so ready to multiply," i.e. the attitude of those (mainly British) critics of Europeanism who dislike its Continental and Roman Catholic overtones. It will therefore be seen that whatever else this book may fail to do, it certainly does not pull its ideological punches.

The area of agreement among the participants in the Rome and Strasbourg discussions is rather more difficult to establish. Aside from the tussle between supporters and critics of European Union, there is an uncertainty over fundamentals which comes out in the opening chapter headed "The Problem of Definition." From this one gathers that Professor Toynbee means by Europe "those Catholic and Protestant Christians who live in this north-western corner of the Old World," while Professor Barraclough (his successor at Chatham House), and the author of the Report himself, reject this definition as too narrow. Dr. Van Kleffens, a former Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, thinks Russia is not in Europe, but Professor Barraclough disagrees; there are similar doubts about Turkey. Again, M. de Rougemont's now familiar distinction between the false church of Moscow and the true Church of Rome is clearly not shared by Mme. Hersch, despite her

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attachment to the *philosophia perennis* and her worry over Marxism and positivism (bracketed together as departures from tradition). In summing up this section, the *Rapporteur* felt bound to note that the main philosophical dividing line may indeed run north-south rather than east-west. At least one French participant at Strasbourg recalled that Professor A. J. Ayer had told the International Congress of Philosophy at Lima (Peru) in 1951 that there were today two incompatible philosophies: the metaphysical tradition of Continental Europe (including Marxism and Existentialism) and the "neo-positivism" dominant in the United States, Britain, and Scandinavia. (It occurs to this reviewer that with a little extra ingenuity he might have related this line-up to the history of the Counter-Reformation—a subject which, in a different context, did indeed crop up during the Rome discussions).

There is of course a way out of these difficulties, and some of the speakers at Rome and Strasbourg seem instinctively to have opted for it: this is to proclaim that Europe's essential unity lies in its diversity, its pluralism, its ability to accommodate the most striking departures from whatever is regarded as the cultural mainstream. The trouble is that this argument does not lend itself readily to support for schemes plainly intended to establish a new integration at the ideological as well as the political level. If Europe, like Mediterranean antiquity before it, is a conglomerate of diverse cultural traditions, why bother to unify it? Alternatively, if the Continent is the repository of a unifying central tradition (roughly identifiable as the *philosophia perennis* and its post-Christian variants), what is to be done about those troublesome northern barbarians, the Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians, with their hankering after strange (Protestant and positivist) gods?

To THE present writer, some of the most satisfying passages of Mr. Beloff's Report are those which throw light on the cultural pattern that has somehow managed to establish itself over the centuries, alongside with (and frequently indifferent to) political and religious cleavages:

"Although use has been made of folklore in the interest of nationalism, the modern folklorist is far more conscious of the resemblances that are found to exist between local customs and even farm implements and clothings, [in] areas widely separated on the map. Thus in Ireland the saddleshoes used in hunting wild duck are similar to those used in Scandinavia. Norwegian nationalists have been shocked to learn that their 'local' costumes

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originated from France, and that the national symbol, the red cap, is really the *bonnet phrygien* of the French Revolution. This is equally true of the central themes of folk literature; research on the theme of the 'substituted bride' involved the study of Russian dialects as well as of Western languages."

This passage clearly owes something to M. de Rougemont's influence. Elsewhere we are reminded that cross-fertilization in the arts extended even to minor performers, such as the first German composers, Hassler and Schuetz, who learned their art in Venice before passing it on to Bach (who was also influenced by Vivaldi); and it is clearly due to M. de Rougemont's presence at these discussions that the reader is reminded of the supra-national significance of the Tristan myth, the common origins of tragic literature, and (on the other hand) the time-lag which prevented the Victorian novelists from realizing (as did their French contemporaries) the general break-up in traditional values.

But in a volume edited by a professional historian, these excursions, fascinating though they are, do not quite blanket the main theme, which after all has to do with Europe's lamentable failure to establish good order in the political sphere. Fortunately Mr. Beloff does not lack forthrightness:

"There is a tendency when Europeans get together to forget the evils of the past and to look only to the amenities of the present or the hopes of the future. This is a mistake. European history is nothing to be proud of. It consists largely of Europeans killing each other for allegedly idealistic motives. The Protestant Reformation plunged Europe into an orgy of war and massacre which lasted for nearly a century and a half. Europe had scarcely recovered when the even bloodier but mercifully shorter war launched by the explosion of the French Revolution burst upon the world. Greed for political and economic power, combined with the demands of submerged nationalities, wrecked the old Europe beyond repair in the holocaust of 1914-19. Totalitarianism in all its forms was born in the trenches of those fatal years. But the worst is more immediate. Until we face the fact that European history also includes the extermination chambers and concentration camps set up by the Nazis, we have no right to discuss it at all."

To which it is possible to say Amen; even though one notes the surprising absence of any mention of the Industrial Revolution which devastated 19th-century England no less thoroughly than Continental Europe had already been uprooted by the Napoleonic wars (it may even have claimed more victims, and certainly had a worse effect on the survivors). European history has indeed witnessed too many catastrophes to enable one to share the more sanguine hopes of those who profess to believe that future developments will be uniformly marked by greater tranquillity. There is a further consideration (not mentioned in this volume): to the extent that Europe has in recent decades become more democratic and pacific, it has also become less important. In Britain, for example, Labor's rise to political eminence has occurred *pari passu* with the decline of England as a world power and the consequent weakening of the traditional ruling class. These processes (already foreshadowed earlier in Scandinavia) suggest a correlation between democracy and power which is uncomfortable, and therefore unfashionable, but should nonetheless be borne in mind, at any rate by historians.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Maurice J. Goldbloom, a frequent contributor, is the author of *American Security and Freedom* (1954).

Nathan Glazer, whose *American Judaism* was recently published, is now teaching sociology at the University of California.

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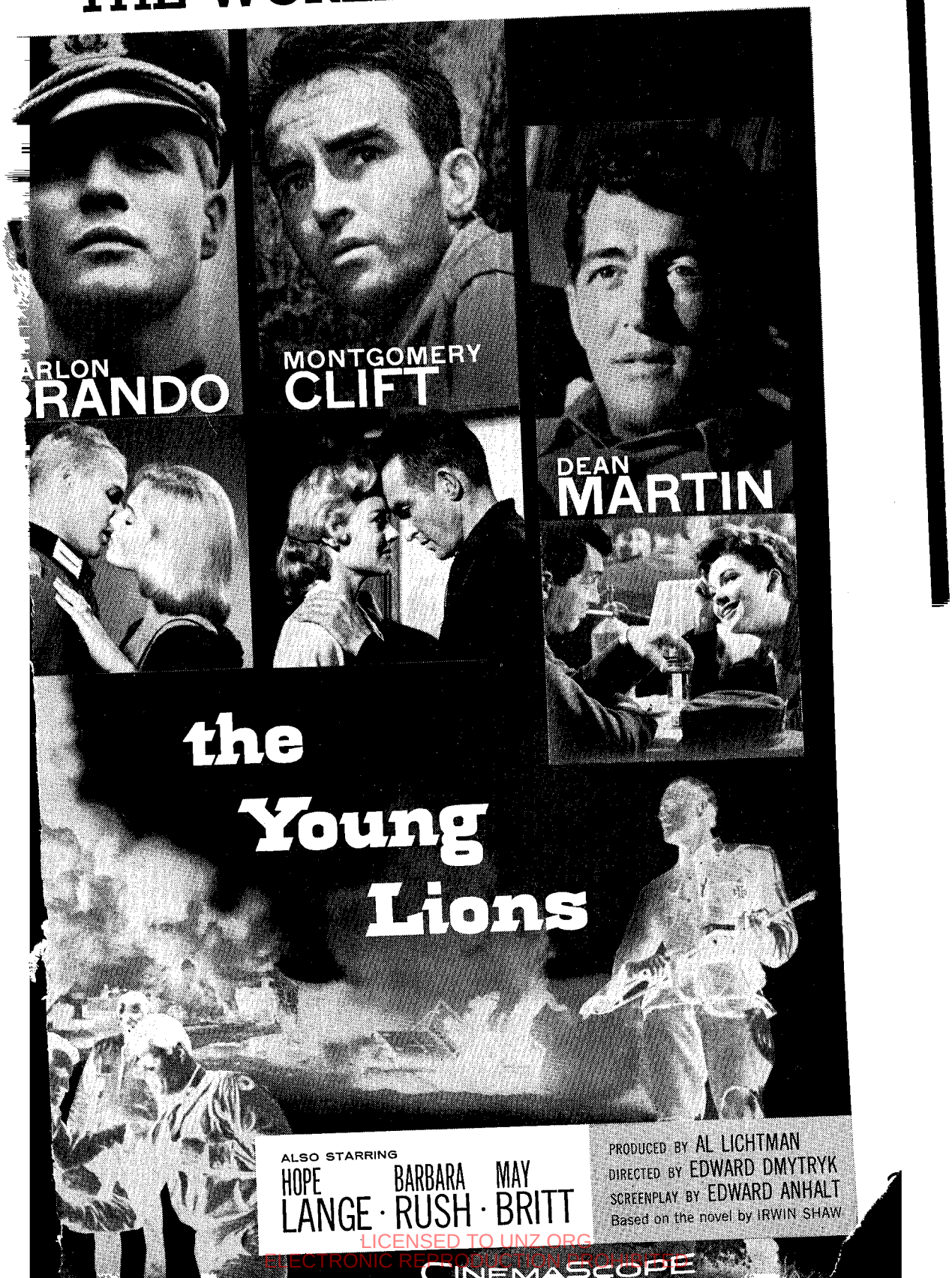

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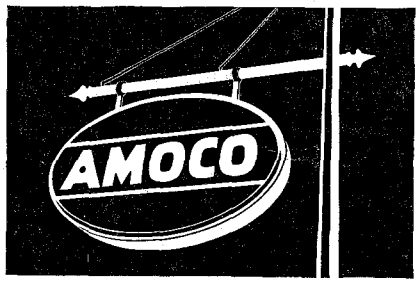

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